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Number 52

October 1988

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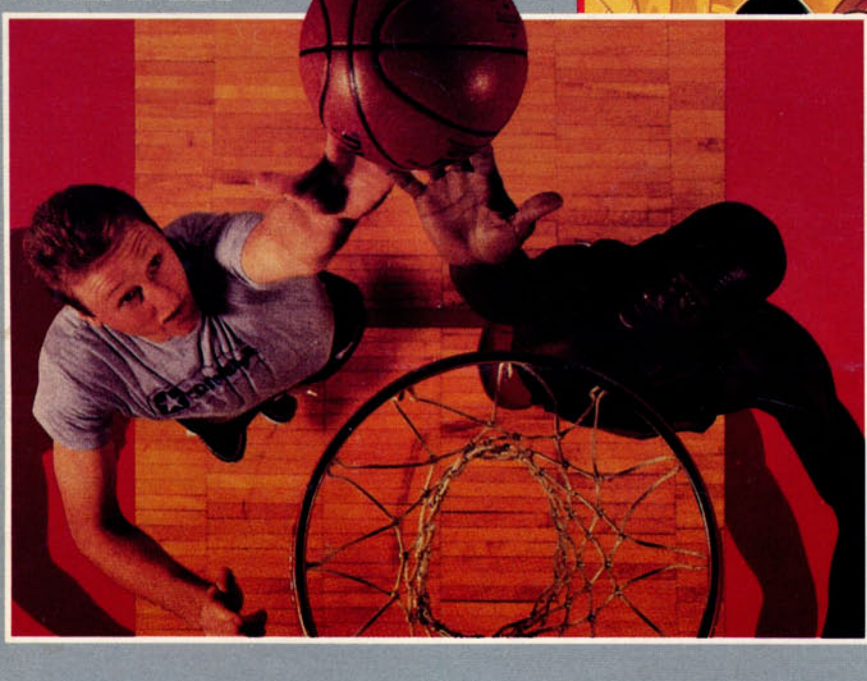
COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

Interviews with Pete Rose and Michael Jordan



Lucasfilm's Zak McKracken

Electronic Arts' Jordan vs Bird



Also In This Issue:

Red Storm Rising • Rocket Ranger

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COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

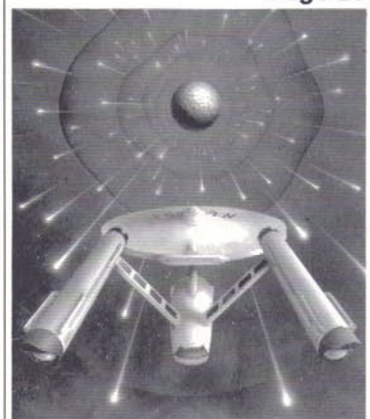
Covering the World of Computer Games For Seven Years

October 1988 **Number 52**

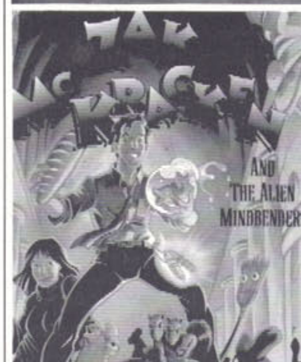
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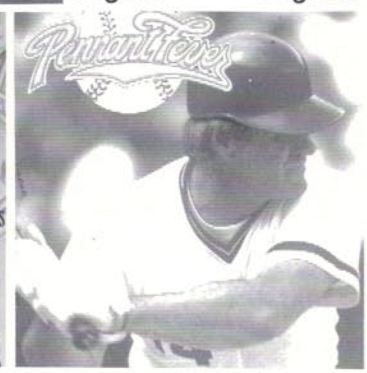
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COMPUTER GAMING WORLD (ISSN 074-667) is published monthly by Golden Empire Publications Inc., 515 S. Harbor Blvd., Suite C, Anaheim, CA 92805. Second Class Postage Paid at Anaheim CA 92803 and additional mailing offices.
Contents are copyrighted by Golden Empire Publications, 1988.
Postmaster: Send address changes to Computer Gaming World, P.O. Box 4566, Anaheim, CA 92803-4666.
The subscription rate for twelve issues (one year) is $24.00. Canadian and foreign surface subscriptions add $7.00. Foreign air subscriptions are $55.00 per year. All payments must be in U.S. dollars, made by check drawn upon a U.S. bank, Visa, Master Card, or money order.
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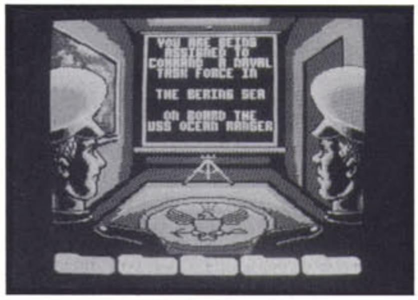
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P.O. Box 3048
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OCEAN RANGER: This is a mission-oriented action/strategy game in which the player commands a fictitious, fast-attack missile craft in a series of modern naval scenarios. The game offers a variety of offensive and defensive options in a fast-paced game. C-64/128 ($34.95). Circle Reader Service Card #1.

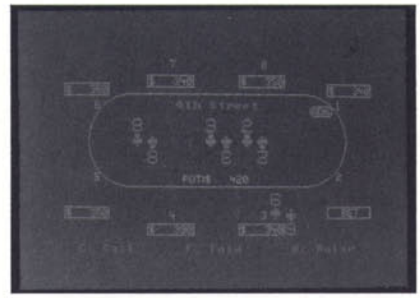
Applications Plus, Inc.
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CHAMPIONSHIP POKER: The "Play & Learn to Win" series is not simply another entertainment program that lets users have a fantasy casino in their computer rooms. These products offer a serious tutorial for those who want to learn to play cut-throat poker with the odds in their favor and also provide a challenging simulation for playing against the computer and testing one's progress. Apple II, IBM PC and PS/2, and Macintosh ($34.95). Circle Reader Service Card #2.

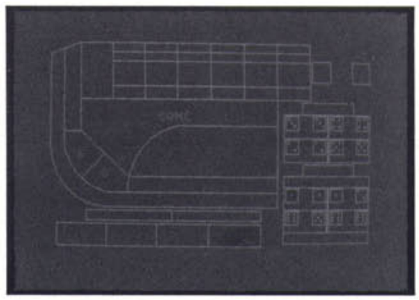
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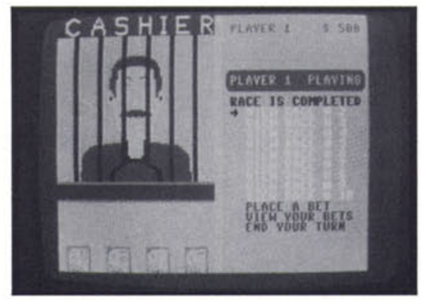
Ocean Ranger



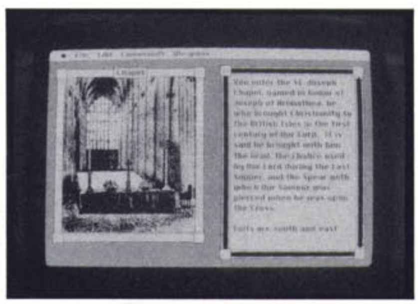
Championship Poker



Strategic Craps



Daily Double Horse Racing



Grail Quest



Lock-On

STRATEGIC CRAPS: Another in the "Play & Learn to Win" series, this tutorial/simulation teaches the game of craps in much the same way "Championship Poker" teaches Hold 'Em. Apple II, IBM PC and PS/2, and Macintosh ($39.95). Circle Reader Service Card #3.

Artworx Software Company
1844 Penfield Rd.
Penfield, NY 14526

DAILY DOUBLE HORSE RACING: You can almost hear the hoofbeats pound the turf in this betting simulation. Players are required to read a detailed pseudo-*Racing Form* that contains race histories of 180 horses over close to 400 races. This game puts the emphasis on handicapping rather than racing. C-64/128 ($19.95), Macintosh ($29.95). Circle Reader Service Card #4.

GRAILQUEST: Did Joseph of Arimathea bring the chalice used by Jesus to administer the Last Supper with him when he brought Christianity to the British Isles? Is it possible to find the artifact King Arthur longed to recover in order to preserve Britain's well-being? This literate text-adventure with detailed black and white illuminations seeks to answer those questions. Macintosh ($29.95). Circle Reader Service Card #5.

Data East
470 Needles Drive
San Jose, CA 95112

LOCK-ON: Fast-scrolling action is the hallmark of this IBM version of the coin-op hit. The arcade-style flight simulation features 20 different game stages or levels, allows joystick or keyboard controls, and utilizes even the fastest processors. Also, like any sophisticated modern fighter, players can use gunfire (cannon) or lock-on (missile) weapons to defeat

(Continued on page 56)



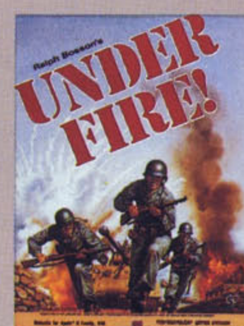
A peaceful morning is ripped by the staccato thunder of an enemy machine gun. In the distance, shrouded by the morning mists, you catch fitful glimpses of enemy activity as you shoulder your weapon and begin another assault. Another dive into the unknown, where death waits to harvest the unwary, the unlucky and the damned.

With experience and skill your forces penetrate the dangerously silent village. Moving forward, nerves on fire with tension while your body soaks up adrenalin like a sponge, you await contact. Soon you find the enemy, the dance has begun. Some Joe screams INCOMING, dives for cover and you are

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Crusader Rabid

The review by Hosea Battles entitled "Jihad Junction" and describing **SSI**'s new strategic space conquest game, *Stellar Crusade*, is right on target (CGW #50, p.24). The documentation *is* useless. I am extremely irate over this one. I enjoy a good strategy game and have a respectable game library to reflect this. Recently, I ordered **SSG**'s *Reach for the Stars 3rd Edition* together with **SSI**'s *Stellar Crusade* in order to enhance the space strategy side of my library. **SSG**'s documentation is excellent. It even supplied a tutorial game (tutorial game option on the disk) that walked you through your first game. After playing the tutorial game, I could satisfactorily play my first RFTS game. *Stellar Crusade* was an entirely different matter. I read the manual from cover to cover, twice, and still had no idea on how to begin play. I could boot the game screen up on my IBM clone with the three simplistic menus in front of me and could not, for the life of me, make heads or tails about what was to be done next.

I returned the *Stellar Crusade* game after devoting many hours in attempting to decipher it. This is the first strategy game that I was forced to return. I was frustrated that I called and wrote **SSI** to register my complaints. The person receiving my phone call hadn't played SC and could offer no solace. He did, however, mention that there had been, at least, ten complaints already. The irony of this one is that the game is probably a very good strategy game.

I would like to see an article in your magazine questioning and reviewing quality control in today's computer game market. It is obvious that **SSI** let *Stellar Crusade* out of the oven before it was fully cooked. It appears that **SSI** didn't take the necessary time to review the manual before delivering the product.

Dr. Stan Ivey
Lakewood, CO

Ed.: Actually, inside sources at SSI reveal that this was probably a case of too much review of the manual rather than too little. Apparently, twelve pages of text were deleted from the manual in an attempt to create a document which looked less imposing. Unfortunately, most readers feel like the game is unplayable without those twelve pages. If there is sufficient interest, CGW would be willing to attempt getting those missing pages out to our readers. In the meantime, we will be publishing a strategy article on SC in the near future. Perhaps, this approach will help unravel some of the confusion. At least, there is something to be done about these complaints. We're not as sure about those in the next letter.

The recent computer wargaming release by **SSI** called *Stellar Crusade* is yet another example in the long list of overt statements of racist, neo-Nazi rantings and ravings by that company.

In the manual that is included with the game, the authors state, in a short glossary of 13 entities that are important to the game's inner workings, that "Aborigines" are:
1) a non-human species,
2) not intelligent.

On the other hand, 2 other species are mentioned explicitly as being "intelligent," in the same glossary.

A problem that has to be openly grappled with in the computer wargaming industry is that a certain zealous contingent of the computer wargaming developers and the market to which they sell are the sort of people that turn up to the Origins wargaming conventions wearing full Nazi regalia. I understand that while such dress has been banned in American wargaming conventions, this still goes on in Australia among other places.

Another SSI game, *Kampfgruppe*, explicitly idolizes the Nazi side of World War II. Perhaps 90% of the demonstrated research that went into that game's creation was research into the exact German names of weapons, trucks, and tanks. The Russians, who, in fact, in sheer numbers performed 80% of the fighting that eventually defeated the Nazis in World War II, have their hardware represented in this game in unadorned numerical form.

I do not believe that your magazine should allow any mention of SSI computer games at all until the particular text in the Stellar Crusade manual is changed and SSI resolves to cease its pandering to the neo-Nazi zealots out there that still persist.

Mark Brown
Chelmsford, MA

Ed.: Perhaps, the manual simply used the term, "aborigine," in the exact sense. That is, according to Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, *an aboriginal inhabitant especially as contrasted with an invading or colonizing people or the original fauna and flora of a geographical area. It sure sounds to us like the manual is speaking of an indigenous space creature, not a specific race of people on this earth. Finally, we resent the erroneous proposition that wargamers are either neo-Nazis or even, necessarily, political hawks. As for the Soviet armor, even the* Encyclopedia Britannica *lists all Soviet armored vehicles except the Joseph Stalin tank by numerical references. As for the Stalin tank, gaming convention regularly refers to this series of tanks by JS-I, JS-II, and JS-III. We will call the people at SSI a group of neo-Nazi panderers if you can convince us that the folks at Britannica Publishing are neo-Nazis. By the way, does the use of the Nazi symbol in Rocket Ranger* make this a neo-Nazi game?

Stinging Rebuttal

Your review of *Deathlord* in the April edition of your magazine was so glaringly inaccurate on many details that I simply had to clear the record and let the readers hear the other side of the story and judge for themselves. Quotes from the article follow, along with my response.

"There are seven fighter types with no apparent necessity for so many." Since when is a good selection a bad thing? Every "fighter type" is unique and has its inherent advantages and disadvantages.

"It takes a great deal of time to wade through all the race and class combinations." Hardly, you pick a race and it shows the classes that race can be. You then choose a class you like and you are done. Where is the difficulty?

"It takes Kishi 'a very long time' to gain spell levels." Naturally, they are essentially a fighter/cleric class. If they could cast spells as well as a cleric, who would ever choose a cleric? The spells are a complement to their fighting skills, not their main forte.

"Yakuza are relatively worthless since anyone can perform their functions." Hardly. Other classes have a slight (5%+Dex bonus) chance of performing thieving skills, while Yakuza start higher and gain in skill. I figured anyone has a chance of lucking out and opening a lock, but only Yakuza are good at it.

"The characters you want to back up cannot be backed up using the backup utility." In the next paragraph, you say that they can be backed up by a dif-

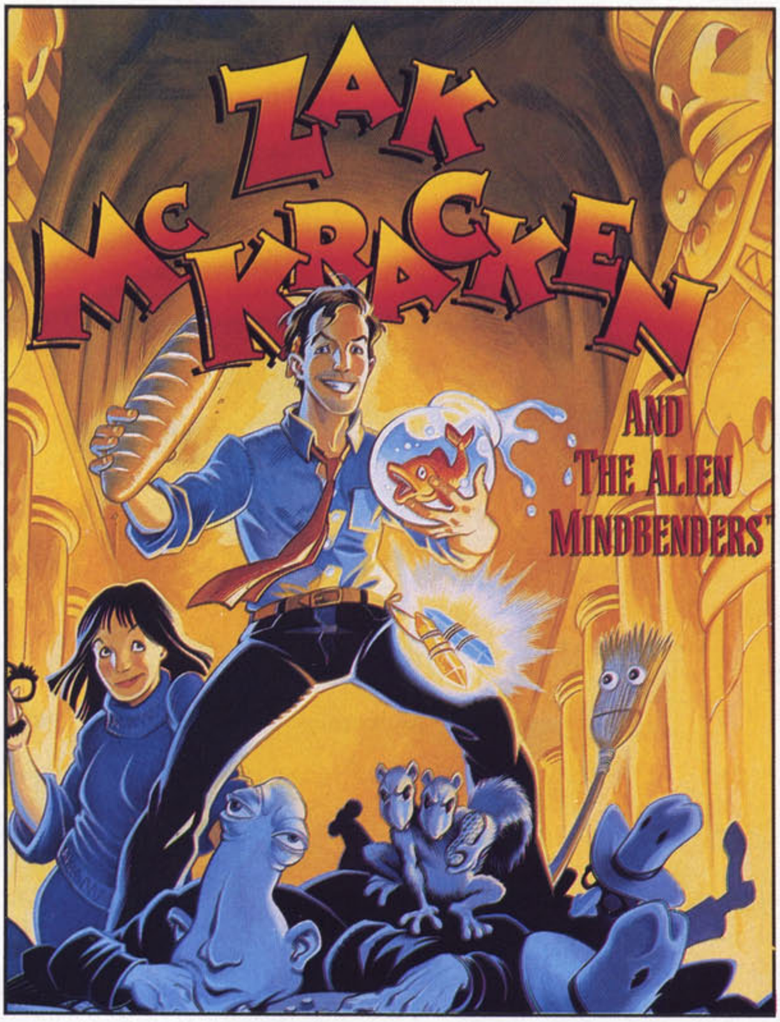
(Continued on page 61)

BIG ZAK ATTACK

Lucasfilm's "Zak McKracken and the Alien Mindbenders"

by Charles Ardai

What if you lived in a world where the headlines in those sleazy supermarket tabloids could be believed? What if you were a reporter for such a sensationalist rag? That is the situation in *Zak McKracken and the Alien Mindbenders*. Meeting Elvis, alive, in the jungle is a nice touch and having two-headed squirrels, golf-worshipping gurus and other assorted oddities of nature cross your path with terrifying regularity allows the crazy tone of the tabloids to come through. The game's atmosphere is suitably light and the puzzles are never so difficult or so deadly as to impede your enjoyment of the story.



TITLE:	Zak McKracken and the Alien Mindbenders
SYSTEM:	IBM, C-64
# PLAYERS:	1
PRICE:	$44.95
DESIGNER:	David Fox
PUBLISHER:	Lucasfilm Games San Rafael, CA

The Play's The Thing

It hardly seems worthwhile to discuss Zak's control system at length. Suffice it to say that it is not significantly different from *Maniac Mansion*'s, which is just fine. You move characters on a graphic window by selecting text commands from a menu at the bottom of the screen. If you want to know more, pick up a copy of *CGW #46*. The controls are still a little clumsy in moments of high tension, but the system is a good one.

The story is worth noting, but only briefly: Zak McKracken, a reporter for a tabloid newspaper (a clever parody called *The National Inquisitor* is stuffed with hints and is included with the game), has a nightmare (also clever, a Pink Panther-style bit of opening animation that may be the best part of the game) which compels him to go on a quest.

What he doesn't immediately know is that a bunch of aliens have a machine which makes people stupid operating by means of the world's phone lines. Along the way, Zak picks up three helpers (the player can switch control to any of the four characters at any time). Together, they must save the world from having its mind bent.

That's it for the story, which is another problem. After setting up a perfectly good premise, the game drops all pretense to plot and becomes yet another "find-the-pieces-scattered-around-the-world-to-build-a-magic-machine" game. Worst of all, the pieces you have to find are different colored crystals, a plot device that was a cliche when *Starcross* (**Infocom**) used it. More recently *The Promethean Prophecy* (**Simon & Schuster**) used the same old motif. If I never see another collect-the-crystals adventure, it will be too soon.

When I mentioned this to David Fox, he said he hadn't realized that collecting crystals had been done before. Presumably, he also hadn't realized that arbitrary puzzles are no longer considered optimal or even, acceptable. Back in the days of *Wizard and the Princess*, we accepted the idea that saying "Hocus" would make a bridge appear over a gorge, even though the same magic word had no such effect elsewhere. Today we demand puzzles that make sense. Most of the time *Zak* delivers—but the designers have only so much imagination, and over the course of the game, it gets stretched mighty thin.

This leaves far too many non-puzzles. For example, you need to open a door, so you use a yellow crayon to connect the dots you see on the wall. Why? There are three buttons on a door on Mars and you must press the buttons in the order that three witch doctors danced in Africa in order to open the door. Why? There are too

many convenient coincidences, too many situations in which the solution is drawing some mystic symbol on the wall. David Fox justifies this by saying that there's a hint about drawing on the wall in *The Inquisitor*. That doesn't mean, however, that this sort of puzzle makes good interactive fiction.

Most Infinite Jest

"Brevity," Shakespeare wrote in *Hamlet*, "is the soul of wit." This is advice many would do well to take to heart. Comedy that gets dragged out too long is like a magic trick performed too slowly. You see the wires; you figure out the effect; and still it goes on, painfully and interminably. If a joke is right on target, though, it can go on forever. You want it to. If a joke misses, however, it is best to get it offstage quickly.

How does this apply to *Zak McKracken and the Alien Mindbenders*? For one thing, the game is being sold as being much longer than its predecessor, *Maniac Mansion*. *Zak* is longer, no question about it, but *Maniac Mansion* is plenty long itself. Is the extra poundage an improvement? Unfortunately, the whole game tends to be huge and cumbersome, and not funny or sophisticated enough to justify its size. Juggling ten balls is not always funnier than juggling three. That is not to say that *Zak* is not a good game. It has moments of brilliance (though fewer than the generally brilliant *Maniac Mansion*) connected by passages of good, if unspectacular, material. It is technically superb, with fluid animation, extensive use of sound effects, and a comfortable control system. It even has a few puzzles that are absolutely perfect. It is fun to play, and, even at its worst, it is entertaining. On the whole, it's a nice little diversion.

What it is *not* is a great game. The tragedy is that, after *Maniac Mansion*, it should have been.

There are plenty of little problems which can be mentioned later, but the game's central flaw must be discussed right away.

Designer David Fox told me that the public's response to *Maniac Mansion* was appreciation mixed with claustrophobia. Players felt stifled by the mansion's walls and wanted to be free to move around in an open environment. Always happy to oblige, Fox wrote the latest game in such a way as to allow players to travel from San Francisco to London to Miami to Mexico to the Bermuda Triangle to Mars to Parts Unknown . . .

So far so good, but here's the rub, no matter how big *Zak* is, there is only so much space on two sides of two disks. In the previous game, players got to explore that house until they were blue in the face. When they were done, they knew every crevice. It felt like a house (and a big house at that). The simulation was rich and the environment was fully realized. When players couldn't go in a direction, it was because a wall prevented them. When an object couldn't be used, it was because that object had no function.

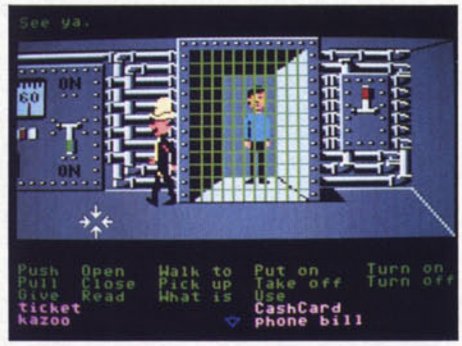
In this new effort, necessity limits San Francisco to a half dozen screens. Why can't characters go down the block past the bakery? It is impossible because there was not space on the disk to program in the rest of the city.

The result is a simulation that feels flat, like a movie town made of propped-up facades or a State tour in Russia. You can only go where the story wants you to go, and it won't let you forget it.

Now, don't tell me this is what you wanted when you said that *Maniac Mansion* made you feel closed in. At least, that game's limitations made sense. Here, you feel like a rat being funnelled through a maze of invisible walls, a puppet in the hands of an arbitrary designer. Believe me, in *Maniac Mansion* you *were* free. In *Zak McKracken and the Alien Mindbenders*, the illusion of freedom is as transparent as a sheet of glass.

Personally, I would rather have had a hundred screens of San Francisco than six each of Mars, Nepal, Cairo and so forth, especially when there is no reason for the globetrotting other than showcasing a variety of background graphics.

What it comes down to is that there is so much more space covered that it is covered less well. As a result, the game feels artificial, a problem which it never overcomes.





A Countenance More In Sorrow Than In Anger

One could harp on other shortcomings, a dozen minor frustrations: you don't select your characters; the characters in the game aren't distinct from each other; the story gets lost several times and is inadequately supported by "cut scenes;" the promised "cinematic touches" and "dramatic camera angles" are mostly limited to straight-on, medium-length shots (much as in *Maniac Mansion*); and the jungle and temple "mazes" are pointless. There is no intent to scare you off. Nevertheless, before you buy this product, you should know what you're getting. You *should* buy it, nonetheless.

Those few perfect puzzles are worth the price of admission. For example, the airplane sequences come to mind, as does building a spacesuit for Zak for when he gets to Mars. Then, too, the humor doesn't always fall flat. The game can be enjoyed and that's what counts.

If it is not too bold, one could ask that **Lucasfilm** take this criticism to heart. No malice is intended. *Zak McKracken and the Alien Mindbenders* is *basically* a good game. It simply could have been better. Therefore, here is my shopping list for the next **Lucasfilm** adventure game. First, until you have unlimited space to work with, pick one location and stick to it. Second, take your time. If you don't have any good ideas for puzzles, wait until you do. Third, go through your games and scrap everything that's tedious and unimaginitive. Being aware of cliches like the crystals could save consumers from disappointment. Fourth, get better music and more of it. What would *Raiders of the Lost Ark* have been without that fabulous John Williams' soundtrack? *Maniac Mansion* was a hard act to follow, but I'll bet you can still design a better one.

Inside the Industry

News, Notes and Quotes From the Computer Entertainment Industry

SIERRA

SIERRA ON-LINE GOES PUBLIC

On August 22, 1988, Sierra President Ken Williams announced that the company had filed a registration statement for an initial public offering of common stock. Though 420,000 of these shares will be sold by certain Selling Stockholders, the company should gain working capital in excess of $10,780,000 should the assumed initial public offering price of $11.00 per share be acceptable to investors. Controlling interest in the corporation is not at issue, since more than 2,000,000 of the current shares of common stock will remain in the hands of current shareholders. The proposed NASDAQ symbol is SIER. The corporation earned more than 12 million dollars in net revenue during the fiscal year ending March, 1988, up from nearly 7 million dollars during the previous fiscal year.

Broderbund Software Enters Joint Venture With 11 Japanese Software Companies

The eleven Japanese partners (**Pony Canyon Inc., MAC Inc. (Humming Bird), T & E Soft Inc., Xtal Soft Company, Ltd., Game Arts Company, Ltd., Kogado Studio Inc., Telenet Japan Company, Ltd., BPS Inc., Micro Cabin Inc., Riverhill Soft, Inc.,** and **Nihon Falcom, Inc.**) will provide the new corporate entity, **Kyodai Software Marketing, Inc.,** with products which have been successful in Japan. **Kyodai** will adapt these for the IBM and compatibles market in North America. **Broderbund Software** will use its distribution network in order to market the products through existing marketing channels in the U.S. and Canada. The new entity plans to market more than 12 titles, predominantly entertainment products, during the first year. Each product will be identified by both the original Japanese publisher and the **Kyodai** brand name.

Electronic Arts Tops $50 Million Mark—Paves Way for Profitable Industry

Electronic Arts has announced that overall sales of software products in fiscal 1987 (ending March, 1988) increased by 67% and international sales skyrocketed upward more than 400%. This announced figure of $50 million in net sales revenue is higher than a previously published estimate of $43.4 million (*Software Industry Bulletin*, 7-11-88, p. 3).

Based on those earlier figures, the San Mateo based company had eclipsed closest rivals **Activision (Mediagenic)** and **Broderbund** by around $7 million in sales ($36.8 and $36.2 million respectively). **Epyx** was the next closest entertainment software publisher with net sales of $27 million, followed by (figures in millions of dollars): **Mindscape** ($25), **Microprose** ($14), **Sierra** ($11.5), **Sir-Tech** ($10.1), **Accolade** ($8.9), and **Avalon Hill Games** ($6).

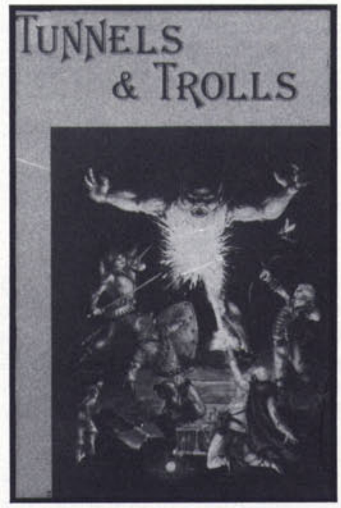
In related news, the **Software Publishers Association** data for the first half of 1988 reflects a healthy situation for the entertainment software industry. In the second quarter of 1988, entertainment software sales moved ahead of Languages/Utilities for second place in sales dollars. This is considerably better than the third place finish in the second quarter of 1987. Also, even though entertainment software finished slightly behind Languages/Utilities when both quarters of 1988 are lumped together, the sales totals for these two categories were considerably closer.

BOARD GAME COMPANIES LICENSE POPULAR TITLES

GDW, publisher of famous board and role-playing games, has recently licensed two more of its popular titles for publication as computer products. In addition to the company's modern naval combat game, *Harpoon*, which is now under development at *Three-Sixty Pacific*, the company's most successful role-playing game has been licensed. **Paragon Software** has signed an exclusive licensing agreement with **GDW** for the rights to design *Traveller* computer games. Veteran *Traveller* campaigners will be interested in knowing that the "Spinward Marches," that sparsely settled area in the "Imperium" is the location for the first computer adventure. The projected release date for the first adventure is March, 1989. In addition, **Strategic Studies Group** has signed an option to produce a *Twilight 2000* computer game. A prototype for the popular role-playing game should be shown in the first half of 1989. Also, several companies are reported to be interested in developing a computer version of the *Team Yankee* game.

On other fronts, **Flying Buffalo** has agreed in principle to

(Continued on page 62)



John Elway's QUARTERBACK

FOOTBALL THE WAY IT WAS MEANT TO BE PLAYED.

Third and ten on your own 30 yard line. Forty-three seconds left on the clock and you're down by two points. Suddenly the end zone seems to be a hundred miles away. If you're going to be a hero, now's the time. You call the play:

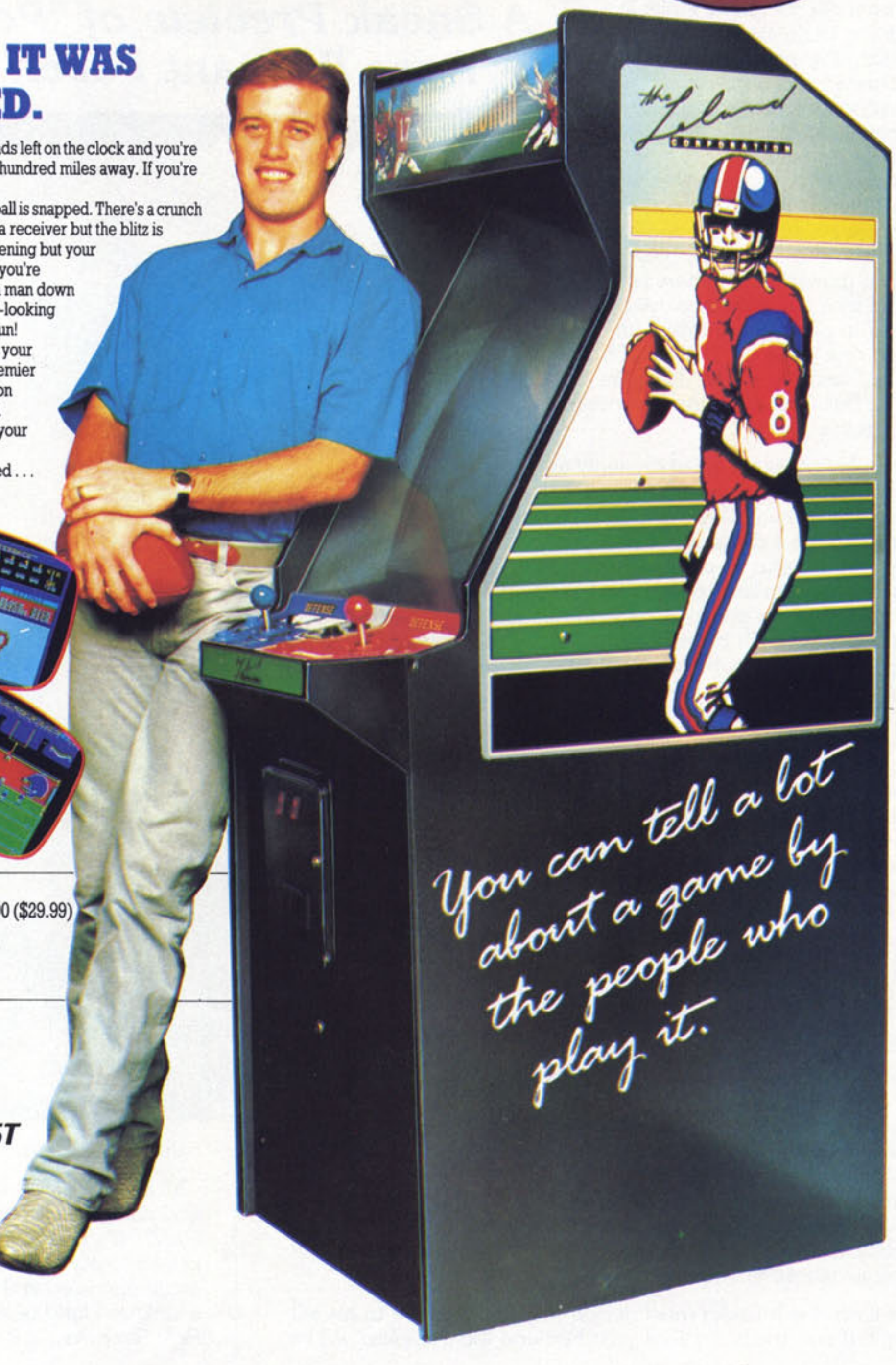
"Yellow-nineteen! Yellow-nineteen! Hut! Hut!! HUT!!!" The ball is snapped. There's a crunch of armor on the front line and you drop back. You look for a receiver but the blitz is on. Roll to the right – you keep dancing, you look for an opening but your blockers are starting to crumble. Keep pedalling back . . . you're in trouble now, you're too deep. But wait! You spot an open man down field! You cock back, ready to fire, when suddenly an ugly-looking tackle is all over you. Do you try and throw? Or duck and run!

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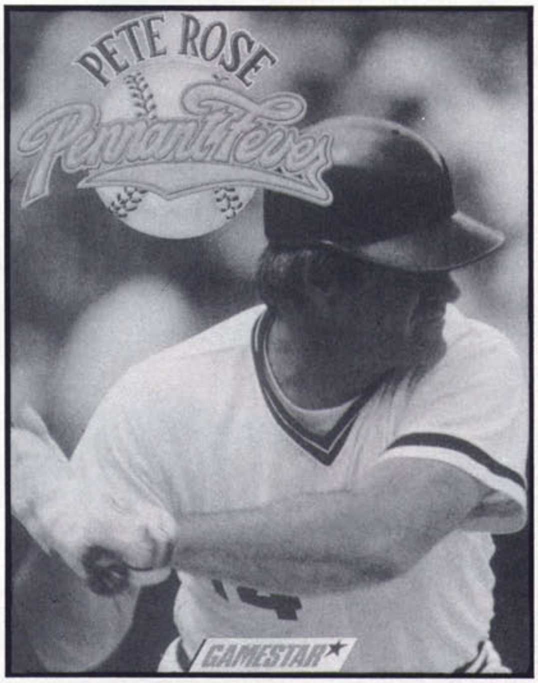
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Catching the Fever with Pete Rose

A Sneak Preview of "Pete Rose Pennant Fever"

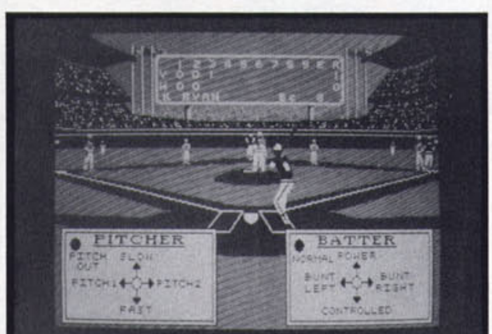
Charlie Hustle! The very mention of the nickname given to Pete Rose conjures up images of flying dust and bodies. It awakens vivid memories of head-first slides and determined expressions. Replays of highlight films filled with grass-staining belly-first catches begin their playbacks in our minds. That's the image **Gamestar** must live up to in its new baseball game, *Pete Rose Pennant Fever*.

Fortunately, the game looks like it is going to do just that. The graphics, ably programmed by Jeff Tunnell and his crew at **Dynamix**, look realistic in all three IBM compatible formats (EGA, CGA, and Tandy) and, except for a slightly annoying flicker, offer beautifully executed animation. Even in CGA mode, the colors are bright enough and exciting enough to command any player's interest. The game's atmosphere is also enhanced by a soundtrack consisting of a rock riff to go with the splash (title) screen, one verse of "The Star Spangled Banner," and a verse of "Take Me Out To The Ball Game" for the seventh inning stretch.



Gameplay offers an initial similarity to **Accolade**'s successful *Hardball!* in that it is for one or two players and the screen displays a diagram for both the batter and the pitcher prior to each pitch, but the similarity doesn't last long. For one thing, the program (at Pete's insistence) offers each batter a choice of going for power or contact, rather than simply going for a bunt or swinging away. In fact, batters even get a choice as to which baseline they will attempt to bunt down. The pitchers in this game choose from either two basic speeds or their two specialty pitches (see below), as well as location for each pitch, similar to the four pitches available in the **Accolade** hit game.





Pete Rose Pennant Fever is a viewpoint oriented game. It is not primarily pitcher versus batter, but relies on the team concept. Particularly in league play, it will be impossible to be successful without considering who is playing in what field and what that player's strengths and weaknesses are. Even in the basic action game, the player must take on the viewpoint of the player whose image is flashing.

In a flash, the infielder must decide whether to move to his left or right. If not, the ball will be past him and the outfielder will be faced with the problem of rushing the ball, fielding it cleanly, and firing it into the active base. After playing this game, a new sense of understanding will come upon the fan who hears a television color commentator note that an infielder moves well to his left or his right.

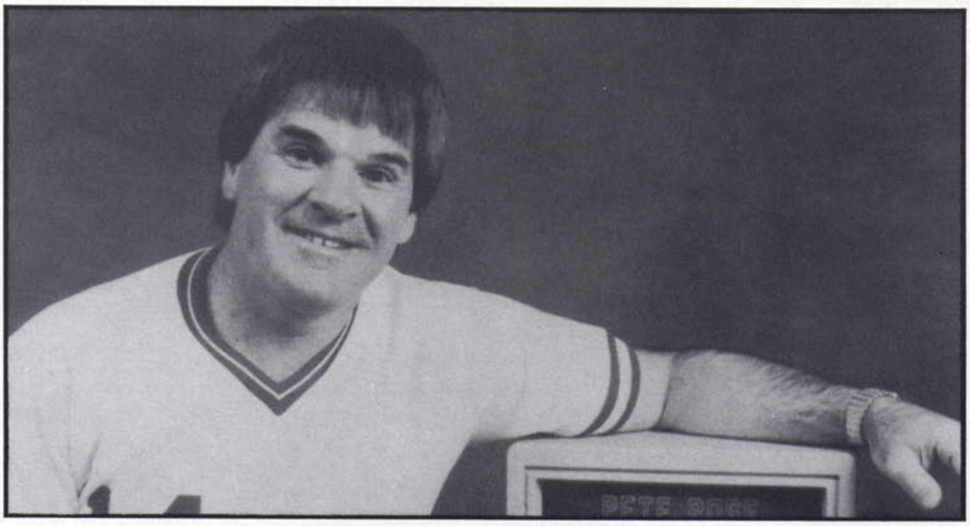
With the outfielder, some of those traumatic memories of childhood may come back before the player gets the feel of the program. Remember how tough it was to judge a flyball when you were just learning to play baseball? Remember those times when you came up on the ball when it was clearly going over your head? Remember those times when you took a couple of steps backward, just before you had to come charging forward? Well, that will happen in *Pete Rose Pennant Fever*, too. At least, it happens until players get used to the angles provided by the fielders' viewpoints.

This is not to say that the classic struggle between pitcher and batter is not important to the game. The age-old "cat and mouse" game is present in this computer game, as well. In fact, if pitchers don't mix up their pitches and move the ball around enough, the computer opponent is quite capable of shellacking them toward the middle of the game.

The real beauty of the game, however, comes with the league play option. The game allows the player to establish an expansion franchise, draft players, and juggle lineups. Position players and outfielders are rated from one to ten in five different categories (batting ability, running, throwing, catching, and handedness) with one being the lowest (or slowest) and ten being the highest (or fastest). Pitchers are rated in the same way for speed, control, and stamina. In addition, each pitcher is considered to have two specialty pitches. These can be either: curves, sliders, knuckle balls, change ups, heaters (super fast balls), or screwballs.

All in all, *Pete Rose Pennant Fever* offers some old challenges and some new ones. It is not as cerebral as *Earl Weaver Baseball*'s manage mode with its authentic database, but it is not as totally action-oriented as *Hardball!* and some of the other arcade games on the market. Indeed, those who are looking for a unique blend of action and strategy will do well to consider *Pete Rose Pennant Fever* and its league play option.

Rose Hustles The Press!



In preparation for our coverage of Pete Rose Pennant Fever, CGW had an opportunity to interview the Cincinnati Reds manager. Our initial conversation came on the last day of his suspension for shoving a National League umpire.

CGW: First, some personal words. Two of our staff used to live in Louisville, Kentucky and would drive over two hours to see the Reds play at Riverfront Stadium. In fact, one of them was there when you tied the club record for hitting safely in consecutive games. Thanks for all of those years of hustling.

Pete Rose: Thank you. I was just down in Louisville the other day. I was at Churchill Downs. Didn't win, but it was fun.

CGW: Getting down to business, what distinct impact has your personal experience as player and manager had upon *Pete Rose Pennant Fever*?

Pete Rose: Mainly providing direction on setting a proper line-up; teaching the guys the difference between swinging for a home run or a base hit; and talking about the fundamentals of why to throw where. I've played six out of nine defensive positions, so I guess I'm qualified to talk about the differences in playing each one.

CGW: Have you actually had a chance to play the computer game, then?

Pete Rose: I played it a while on my last trip out there. They said I picked it up pretty fast. I'd sure hope so.

CGW: You made a statement in **Activision**'s original press release on the game that suggested statistics were being overemphasized in baseball. If the emphasis of the computer game is supposed to be reflective of "on the field" action, why is the general manager approach included?

Pete Rose: The general manager portion reflects a real part of baseball. The game does take place "on the field," but a manager would be in trouble without a good front office. The reason I said what I did about statistics is because I wanted to emphasize that baseball is about playing today's game, not yesterday's or last week's.

CGW: Speaking as a manager, then, what insights other than statistics do you use in making a managerial decision? Do you pinch hit on the basis of a player's performance in batting practice or what?

Pete Rose: In using a pinch hitter, I stick with the traditional percentages. I try to use a right-handed pinch hitter against a left-handed pitcher and vice-versa.

CGW: What about those players who statistically perform better against pitchers who throw from the same side as they bat from?

Pete Rose: I know what you mean, but I think the only exception to the basic percentages should be when you have a guy like Fernando [Valenzuela] on the mound. Fernando's best pitch is his scroogie, so you can take away his best pitch by sending a leftie up against him. I also want to pinch hit someone who is swinging the bat well.

CGW: In yesterday's game or in batting practice?

Pete Rose: Probably batting practice. Batting practice is a confidence builder. If you're hitting well in batting practice, you're going to do well in the game.

CGW: And how are you going to know this in *Pete Rose Pennant Fever*?

Pete Rose: There is supposed to be a pre-game "Scouting Report." That ought to give you some idea. As a team manager, I like to know what players are hot or cold, whether they're on my team or theirs.

CGW: As a player, do statistics have an impact on your confidence or do you simply try to avoid paying attention to them?

Pete Rose: I think you ought to avoid paying attention to them, but it's just not always possible. Of course, they can be something of a confidence builder if you're going good.

CGW: If you were a general manager, what types of tangibles or intangibles would you use in judging talent?

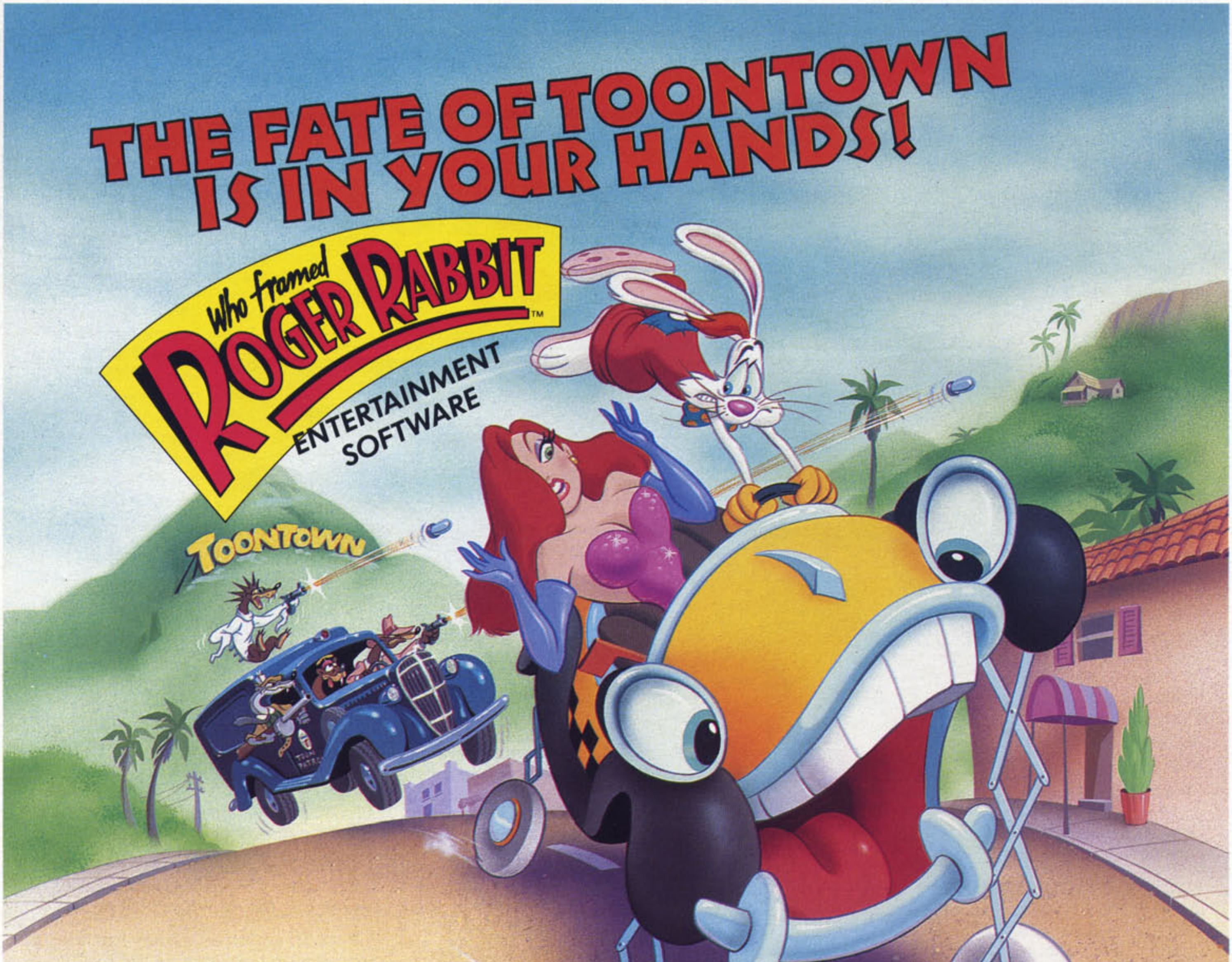
Pete Rose: I want players that want to win, players that are a lot like me. On the Reds, I'm the one who has to live with the guy, so if I don't like him, he's usually not in a Reds uniform. In general, though, you need that GM, because there are simply not enough hours in the day for you to do both jobs.

CGW: Does the game system in *Pete Rose Pennant Fever* offer enough information to be a general manager?

Pete Rose: I think so. They tell me that you can trade players in the minors by statistics and ratings. Those ratings should tell you what kind of player you're getting.

CGW: We're running out of time, but we just can't resist asking this—particularly today. What impact will "umpiring" have on the game? Will there be any bad calls?

Pete Rose: I sure hope not, but if there are any bad calls, I tell you this, a manager who touches an umpire is not going to get the same kind of suspension I got. I shouldn't have done it, but the suspension was too long!



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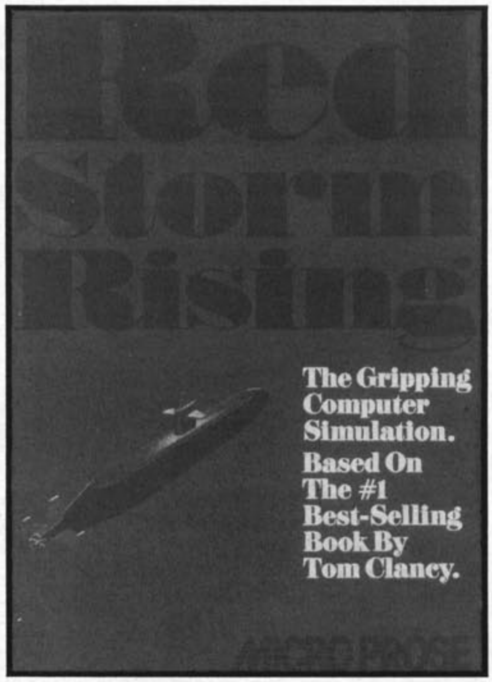
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BUENA VISTA SOFTWARE

Red Storm Rising™

by M. Evan Brooks

TITLE:	Red Storm Rising
SYSTEM:	C-64/128
# OF PLAYERS:	1
PRICE:	$44.95
DESIGNERS:	Sid Meier and Arnold Hendrick
PUBLISHER:	Microprose Software Hunt Valley, MD



At last, the long-awaited computer simulation of Tom Clancy's best-selling novel has arrived. Since Clancy and co-author Larry Bond played out many of the naval scenarios by using the latter's *Harpoon* (a miniatures wargame which is soon to be released in its own right as an independent computer simulation), *Red Storm Rising* is probably the first simulation inspired by a book which was inspired by a simulation which in turn is engendering another simulation.

A Novel Experience

Microprose has chosen to simulate the actions of a modern nuclear attack submarine. While the novel covered World War III in its "entirety" (with short shrift to the land forces), the game is a submarine simulation with a campaign game that affects the progress (?) of World War III.

This reviewer expected an updated *Silent Service*—good graphics and decent play, but nothing really "novel." Instead, *Red Storm Rising* and *Silent Service* have the same relationship as a whale and a minnow (One is a mammal and one is a fish—the only thing they have in common is that they swim under the water). Submarine warfare in the modern age is a new world. It is not necessarily better, but it is definitely different.

The documentation for the game is voluminous (108 pages), complete, and up to **Microprose**'s traditionally high standards. It is actually more intimidating in appearance than in actual use, since more than half of this is historical explanation and designer notes. Reading the documentation is necessary, but one can do a quick read, and grasp the basic concepts in an OJT (on-the-job) function. Also, an overlay has once again been included for the Commodore versions and this greatly assists the user in ease of learning and play.

Akin to most **Microprose** simulations, one chooses a time period to simulate. In this case, one chooses 1984, 1988 (the actual scenario in the book), 1992 or 1996. Later periods have more sophisticated weaponry and tactics have to evolve with technology.

After choosing a boat (from one of several classes ranging in sophistication), one can choose a difficulty level ranging from Introductory to Ultimate. For most, the introductory levels are sufficient to yield a grasp of the mechanics in 2-4 playings and jumping to Ultimate will be a winnable challenge thereafter (at least in the 1988 scenarios).

Players may choose to battle against a submarine, a wolf pack, a destroyer, or a naval group. In addition, a chance engagement or World War III may be selected. The World War III campaign offers numerous scenarios, each of which affect the overall war situation. Successes roll back the Warsaw Pact slightly, while successive defeats show the European map with a redward expansion which eventually leads to NATO surrender. As an officer of the defeated powers, you will be lucky enough to spend the next decade in a Gulag! This reviewer cannot yet report the effects of success!

A Showy Display

Generally, one will view three displays on the screen: the tactical display, the navigation display, and the secondary display (contact, threat weapon vectors, etc.). While a periscope does exist, one will rarely utilize it because the submarine cannot get closer to the surface than 10' (mainly because a modern nuclear submarine has no reason to surface other than to surrender).

Orders to the helm are quick and easy. Weaponry ranges from standard Mark 48 torpedoes to Harpoon and Tomahawk missiles. Missiles must be launched within 300' of the surface, but reach the target easier than torpedoes. Torpedoes may be individually driven into the enemy, but this individualized type of attention is impossible when one is threatened with torpedoes and missiles dropping in from all directions.

The worst threat is the enemy submarine. With the same assets and weaknesses that you have, the enemy rarely travels alone—better to face a carrier group than a wolfpack! Therefore, as you target the sub you know about, the other enemy vessels are busy targeting you.

Identification of enemy vessels must be made by comparing acoustic signatures (at lower difficulty levels, this is accomplished by the crew; at the ultimate level, the captain's job is a lonely one . . .).

Targeting the enemy requires a choice as to weapons system. The graphics are more than adequate and give a substantive feel about what the submarine service is about.

A Tantalizing Observation

Strike Fleet (**EA/Lucasfilm**) [cf. *CGW*, #46] was a rendition of modern surface warfare. There, the submarine was the terror of the sailor. With *Red Storm Rising*, one can become that terror and confront the problems facing the contemporary Silent Service.

NEXT MONTH: A detailed review and tactical discussion of *Red Storm Rising*. Since the novel is now required reading for the Naval War College's Maritime Operations Course and this reviewer is currently enrolled in that course, we will attempt to secure the services of several submarine officers for an in-depth review, as well as opinions from Larry Bond.

The Enterprise Establishes "First Contact"

The Latest "Star Trek" Adventure

by Scorpia

A mysterious superpulse of energy flits across the galaxy at unheard-of speeds, leaving shaken starships in its path. As it flashes through space, Star Fleet Command studies the phenomenon, and comes to a conclusion: the pulse is a signal. A signal sent out by unknown aliens, searching the skies for other sentient beings. So the race begins: who will it be—Federation or Klingon Empire—to make . . . First Contact?



First Contact, third in the *Star Trek* series from **Simon and Schuster**, puts you once again in the role of Captain James T. Kirk, commander of the *Enterprise*. Kirk's mission, this time around, is to contact the aliens sending out the pulse before the Klingons do. The mission is complicated by the fact that the source of the pulses seems to be in an unmapped area of space claimed by the Klingons, although the Federation has not recognized the claim.

TITLE:	Star Trek: First Contact
SYSTEMS:	Apple II (128K), IBM
# PLAYERS:	1
PRICE:	$39.95
DESIGNERS:	Micromosaics Productions
PUBLISHER:	Simon & Schuster New York, NY

Matter (The Plot)

As a cover for the actual mission, the *Enterprise* is detailed to bring a party of diplomats to a nearby star system, Gothica, to attend the coronation of the planet's king. After dropping off the diplomats, Kirk can get on with the real business at hand, locating the aliens.

Right from the start, it's a rough ride (would you expect anything else?). Ferrying the diplomats to Gothica turns out to be more than Kirk bargained for, especially when one of them turns up strangled. Obviously, there is an impostor on board. Figuring out who it is (and how to prove it) will help pass the time until the ship reaches its destination (Warp 1 is not all that speedy).

When the ship arrives at Gothica, Kirk is conveniently invited to watch the coronation ceremony along with the diplomats. If you have a bad feeling about this, you're absolutely right. As the prince enters the room, one of the guards strikes out at him with a knife. Fortunately, it misses, but in the confusion, the royal sceptre (don't leave the throne without it) is stolen and the would-be assassin manages to escape.

This puts rather a crimp into the coronation ceremony and it is called off for the time being. You hardly need to be told who is asked to help retrieve the missing sceptre: Captain Kirk to the rescue again. With a little help from the crew and the contents of a trash basket, the traitor is soon unmasked. Unfortunately, he doesn't happen to have the sceptre with him.

Where is it? On its way to Klingon territory, with the *Enterprise* in hot pursuit. Klingon territory usually means Klingon ships, and that's just what turns up. Time for battle stations and a quick but fierce combat with the enemy vessel.

The *Enterprise* pulls through (we hope . . . it is possible to end up dead here), but she is not in the best of shape. However, just by the merest chance, the ship is near the very star system it wanted to go to in the first place, the one from which the pulses originated.

This is the planet Avon (not cosmetics, Shakespeare). Beaming down, Kirk and crew find themselves surrounded by actors spouting lines from various Shakespearean plays. This is strange enough, and things get a little stranger when it turns out that these actors aren't human at all, but androids.

Another little mystery (although an easy one) to solve and Kirk finally reaches the source of the transmissions. First contact, at last!

Well, not exactly. Before the aliens will agree to see them, Kirk and crew have to prove themselves by passing a few tests (as though they haven't been through enough already). Fortunately, the tests are not too difficult, so Kirk should pass them with flying colors and really make first contact with the aliens.

Anti-Matter (Criticisms)

In spite of everything that seems to be happening, First Contact is actually a very easy adventure. Most of the situations generally require very little effort, a few actions at most, to resolve them. Even the end game, with its five puzzles to solve, doesn't take too much effort.

Further, the crew, Spock in particular, are overly helpful most of the time. In many cases, before Kirk even has a chance to think about a situation, one person or another chimes in with a helpful hint or suggestion. Thus the player is practically led by the nose through much of the game.

This would have been less irritating if Kirk had at least been given some time to work things out by himself, and then perhaps one of the crew would say something if too much time had passed. As it is, Kirk gets so much help from his officers that they could almost solve all the problems themselves.

Another disappointment is the lack of variety in the landing parties. While Kirk can set them up himself, the manual advises you to let Renner, the transporter officer,

do it. The problem with this is that she always picks the same people, namely Spock, Scott, McCoy and Denjik (an alien; more about him in a bit). Since the party members generally do little more than give advice, it would have been nice to have different officers in the party from time to time.

The presence of Denjik, an alien discovered on board early in the game, is quite pointless. After being found out, he never uses his special talent. In fact, he does nothing of importance. While he can be asked questions about a number of things (a sort of walking encyclopedia), much of the information could just as easily have been provided by other crewmembers. Denjik adds little, if anything, to the game.

One annoying feature on the IBM is the need to use the "Look" command in many instances to see who is in the room with you or what objects may be there. For some reason, when entering a new location, the people who are present are sometimes not displayed along with the room description.

Don't expect to have many informative conversations with aliens. The really important information will be volunteered by them, and in most cases questions beyond that will not yield much that is useful to completing the game.

Plotting is very loose, and seems to have been designed to make it easier for the player to solve the problems, rather than to provide any real challenges. The two assassins, for instance, do not act with any particular degree of intelligence, making them fairly easy to discover.

The Bridge (Game Controls)

Game play itself is done through a series of screens and function keys, although commands can also be typed in from the keyboard. Those who have played *Star Trek: The Kobayashi Alternative* will find this familiar, as it's the same kind of setup. The upper half of the screen provides text descriptions of locations. The lower half varies somewhat depending on whether Kirk is aboard the *Enterprise* or on a planet, but it will always show his current location, which directions he can move, elapsed time, and the transporter setting (if any). The middle of the screen contains the command line for typed commands.

Function keys are more complex this time around, and in some cases, typing in a command (especially during the Klingon battle) may be faster than cycling through the functions. For instance, F6 on the IBM brings up an Orders menu, which is further broken down into Bridge Orders, Crew Orders, Planet Orders, Attack Orders, Transporter Orders, and Alien Questions. Choosing one of these (again with a function key) then brings up one more menu, containing the specific commands.

Other keys allow you to look around, examine objects and people (a menu comes up for this), use items, add or drop things in your inventory, give items to someone, etc. It's important to become familiar with these function keys, since in many cases they are the only way that Kirk can do things; the command line is strictly for orders and questions.

Throughout the game, little conversation windows pop up whenever someone talks to Kirk. A box appears on the screen, with the person's name and text inside it. Each person has his own color and location. For example, Scotty's box is always in red and appears in the upper left; alien conversations always appear in the top middle in a sort of purple color; and so on. Sometimes, these boxes pop up by themselves, as when Uhura announces a message from Star Fleet command or a crew member has a suggestion to make. At other times, they show up in response to a question or command from Kirk.

The game is, thus, mostly text-oriented, although there are a few graphic pictures in it. These graphics are primitive, and would have better been left out of the adventure. Fortunately, there aren't too many of them, and they can be turned off.

Engine Room (Game Play)

Using the ship's computer is a handy way to pick up information on planets and people (it even has cross references, which are must reading), but the most fun with this is reading about people and events from the old TV series.

On the IBM, time passes whether you're doing something or not (there is a pause option to freeze the game if you need it, and the speed can be changed as well). On the Apple, time passes only in response to actions. Therefore, when travelling in space, Apple owners will have to be moving around or otherwise doing something to make the time pass and the ship move.

The *Enterprise* has 27 levels, and you can go to all of them, although all the action on the ship takes place on the bridge, deck 5, and deck 7. The other decks have a few rooms on them that you can visit, but you won't find anything of importance in them.

The manual is fairly adequate in explaining the game and the function keys, although with so many different functions available (often accessed through sub-menus) it can be a little confusing at times. A quick reference card with a recap of the function keys would have been helpful in keeping track of them all.

The same manual is used for both the IBM and Apple versions, with differences in commands explained as you go along. Read this carefully, as some options on one computer may not be available on the other, while other options available on both machines may be handled or accessed differently.

The game disks (both versions) can be copied, and the manual recommends you do this before starting play. The IBM version can be put on hard disk, which I recommend, especially if you have only one floppy drive (the manual gives instructions for a 2 drive system or hard drive; nothing is said about using 1 drive only on the IBM). On the Apple, you can use one or two drives.

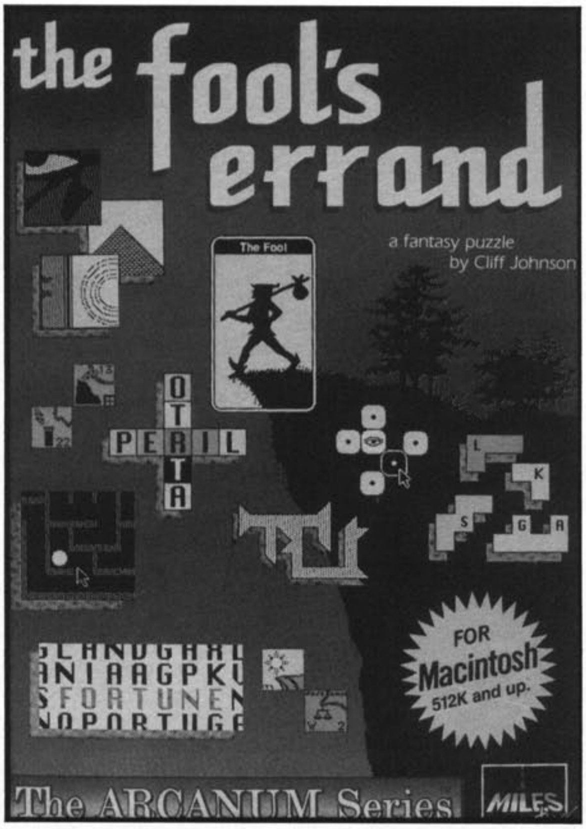
The game can be saved or restored at almost any time, either to floppy drive or hard drive. If you're saving to a floppy disk, you may want to have a couple of extra save disks ready, or you can write over an existing save if you run out of room on the disk. Save positions can be given a name on the IBM and a number on the Apple.

Bottom line: Primarily for begining to average players, since advanced players will get through this one in an afternoon.

the fool's errand

by Alan Roberts

The High Priestess has put a curse on the land, hidden the fourteen treasures, and plunged the four kingdoms into war. Your task is to travel through the land, solving puzzles and . . . I see you're yawning. You say you've seen this plot before? That it sounds, well, familiar? Good! That's the *only* familiar thing about this game.



When the president of **Miles Computing** says, "*Fool's Errand* is 20% like an adventure game and 80% unlike any other computer game," he's being modest. You won't have to "look in compost heap" or "give tire iron to minotaur" in this game. The puzzles you have to solve are the old-fashioned kind: mazes (with secret doors), anagrams, crosswords, find-a-word, jigsaw and coded message puzzles. There's even a game of three card Thoth to be played, but you'll have to figure out the rules as you go along!.

Title:	Fool's Errand
System:	Macintosh
Price:	$49.95
Designer:	Cliff Johnson
Publisher:	Miles Computing Canoga Park, CA

Playing Your Cards Right (Part One)

The game comes in two parts: completing the Sun's Map and finding the fourteen treasures. The essential inspiration for *Fool's Errand* comes from the Tarot deck. At the start of the game, there are twenty-one areas you can go to (corresponding to the major arcana). When you choose an area from the menu, you are presented with a fragment of the story scroll (which contains hints for the second half). Each area has a puzzle to solve. These are a challenging collection of traditional puzzles.

Once you've "overcome the enchantment," as they say, you gain access to more areas. You also are given new pieces to the Sun's Map. The Sun (the area you begin the game in) is the last puzzle to be solved. To proceed on to the second half, you must arrange the eighty square tiles in the correct order. There is a catch. Unlike your usual jigsaw puzzle, you can't move the pieces "off the board" until you've found a place for them. As you progress and get several large blocks put together, keeping them from overlapping becomes the major task.

Half-time Entertainment

Once the Sun's Map has been completed, you can print out the entire story. Up to this point, you have only been getting fragments of the story. Take the time out to sit back and read the story (you deserve a break anyway). Some computer games include fiction as a method of hiding clues and they are rarely worth (as literature) the staples holding them together. This one is a good read. Although the characters flash by like scenery in a slide show, one can feel a surprising empathy for their plight. Now, back to the business at hand.

Hide and Go Seek (Part Two)

There are plenty of clues as to what and where the fourteen lost treasures are. There are clues on the map, in bold type in the story, and on the "Book of Thoth" itself. All you have to do is unscramble them. Once you enter their names into the book of Thoth, a new icon pops up on the Show Disk and you can go for the final confrontation with the High Priestess.

Playing the Fool (Conclusions)

This game grabs your attention like poison oak under a plaster cast and is just about as easy to put out of your mind. It is spectacular from the start! You feel like you're matching wits with the author directly, instead of playing "hunt the parser." The animation that begins and ends the game (while brief) is excellent. The graphics that are used throughout the puzzles are first rate. Also, for those who dislike arcade sequences, only one puzzle calls for quick arcade-gamer's reflexes.

The least interesting puzzles in the game involved button pushing. In these, a message is spelled out if you get the right combination. This was not too bad when there were only five buttons (120 combinations), but *eight* buttons! Eight buttons means 40,320 possibilities.

Frankly, since the company newsletter said that there will be sequels to *Fool's Errand*, it is to be hoped that there will be no more button puzzles. This is where most gameplayers will raise the white flag and ask for the hint book. It should come as no surprise to anyone playing the game that the hint book is *also* full of codes and puzzles.

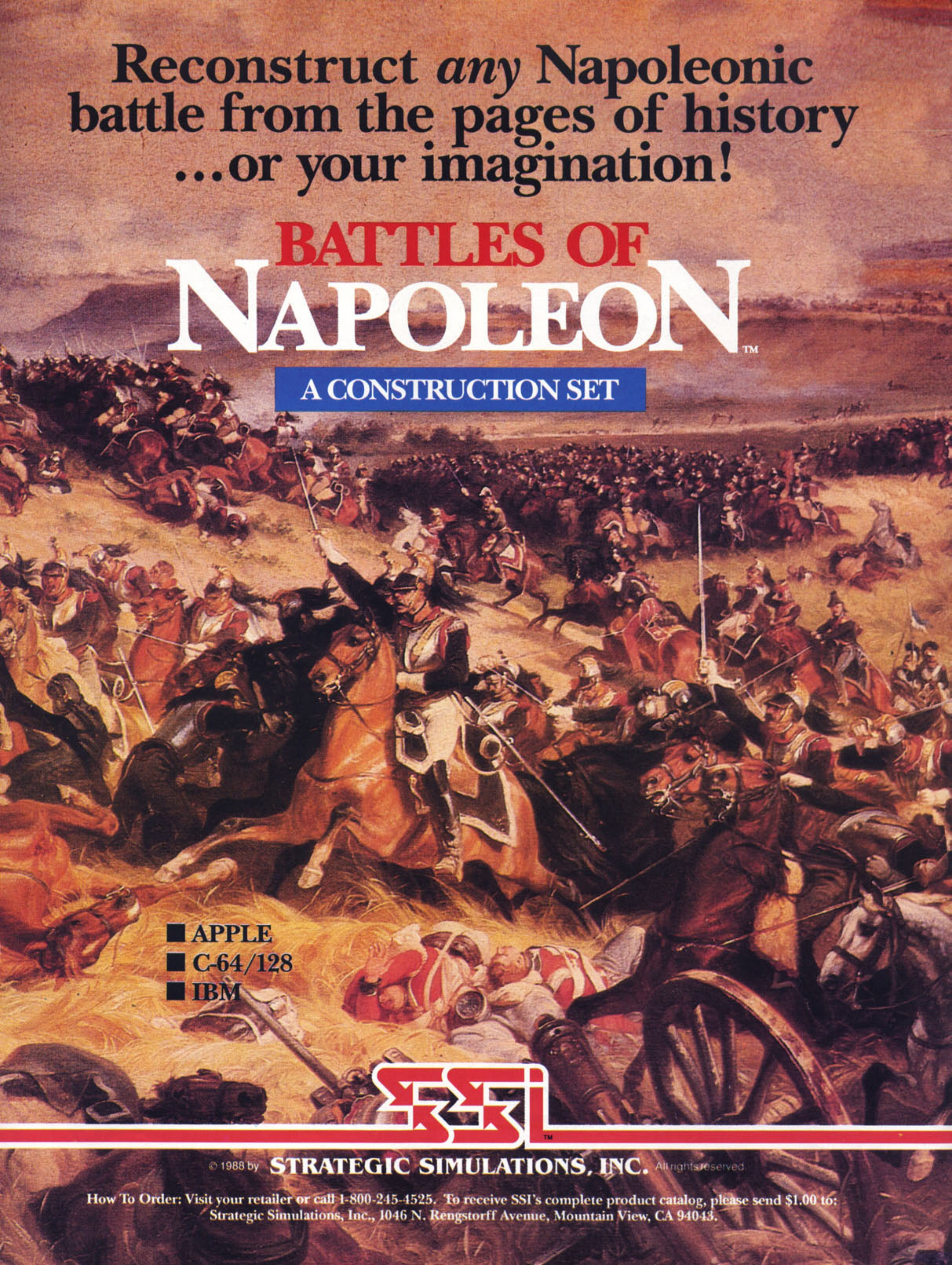
While I don't recommend this game to everyone, those who like word games and jigsaw puzzles will find this game as addictive as *Rubik's Cube*. If you know someone who "doesn't do games on computers," try this one out on them. Give them a taste of what they're missing.



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Scorpion's Mail

Summer is behind us at last, and what a long, hot summer it was; hardly any new games came out (sigh). Even Fred was depressed. Now, we can look forward to all the new releases coming out for Christmas (yeah!). While we're waiting for these goodies to arrive, let's take a trip to the back room and see what the mailbag has to say about current favorites.

Wasteland

I've been getting a lot of mail on this one lately, and several questions have been showing up with great frequency. many people are having a great deal of trouble reaching the door located in the teleport room (in Finster's brain). This one isn't so much hard as tricky. You can think your way out of this one, but only after you've been trapped. Another popular question concerns the night terror. A lot of folks have been wasting precious ammo on him. He really is indestructible, so just leave him alone. Finally, there is the problem of servo motors when repairing Max. A number of people have reported needing more motors than they can find. Not everyone has this problem, but the easiest way around it is to make a new disk 3 and try again. If that doesn't work, make a couple more and collect as many servo motors as you can. Eventually, you will put enough into Max to make him work (and if Max isn't fixed, you can't get to the endgame, so you really have to do it).

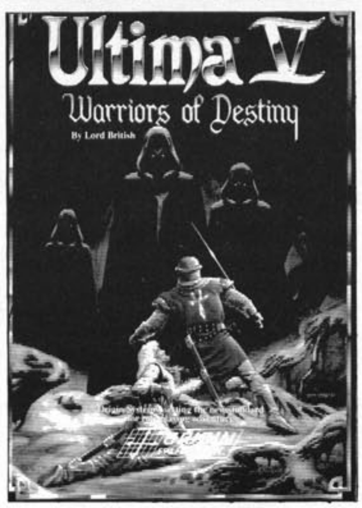
Ultima IV

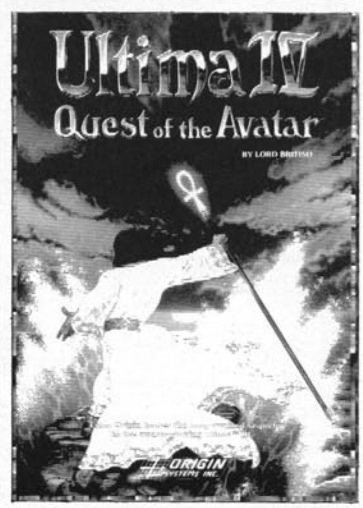
Many people do not realize the importance of having a complete party of eight when going into the Abyss. Without a full party, you won't be able to complete the game. I've had several people write to me about being denied entry at the Codex Door, and that is the reason why. Unless you have all eight (including yourself, of course), the game won't let you in. In fact, note that all eight must be alive (corpses don't count!). Which also brings up the matter of the shepherd, who some folks have found to be rather elusive. Remember that each town represents one of the attributes, and thus provides one member of the party (don't forget to include yourself there!). If you think about it, you'll realize there is only one place the shepherd can be, and that's where to look . . . you just have to look very carefully.



Ultima V

After mentioning in a previous Mail that it's bad to take crops from the fields, I've been receiving letters asking if it's ok to take the crops from Iolo's field. The answer to that one is "No!." Even though Iolo may be in your party, you still can't take the food. This may not be logical, but that's the way it is. Also, people have been looking in vain for an airship (balloon) and/or a ship's wheel. Despite the fact that these objects are mentioned, they are not in the game. If you've been trying to find them, forget about them and go on to more important things.





(Continued on page 24)

Terrorism in the 22nd Century

Rainbird's "Carrier Command"

by Hosea Battles

SCENE: 2166

SETTING: Your commanding officer has just briefed you on the terrorist takeover of the ACC Omega. There are only two aircraft carriers like the Omega in existence. You command the other, the ACC Epsilon. The terrorists have threatened to destroy several newly emerged volcanic islands with enough energy to solve the current fuel crisis. They have demanded 15 billion dollars within 72 hours. Your mission is to stop the Omega from destroying those islands. If necessary, you are to destroy your sister aircraft carrier.



TITLE:	Carrier Command
SYSTEM:	Atari ST
# PLAYERS:	1
PRICE:	$39.95
DESIGNERS:	Clare Edgely Richard Pinto
PUBLISHER:	Rainbird Software Menlo Park, CA

Thus is the curtain raised in *Carrier Command*. The game comes equipped with a single-sided disk, stereo cassette with the long version of the title song ("It's Just Another Mission"), a 64-page manual, and a computer-specific reference card. Although the disk has a copy program to assist in making a back-up copy, the program uses a biblical off-disk protection scheme ("Seek and ye shall find"—i.e. turn to the page and find the word).

Some of the graphics in the game are reminiscent of the hollow three-dimensional graphics in the original *Starglider* (i.e. the damage control screen and side-view display on the status screen), but most of the action screens use solid three-dimensional objects with more in common with *Starglider II* than the original *Starglider*. Normally, the player is presented with a view that displays a primary viewscreen which is surrounded by icons. Clicking on one of these icons causes the display in the primary viewscreen to change to different images. Hence, one might see a view of maps, a launch of aircraft or off-shipping of tanks, a display of firing lasers, and more.

One example of the care taken with these graphics is the construction of "Automatic Command Centres." These centers are effectively mines, factories, storage facilities, and defense complexes. The nice graphic touch is that the program displays the ACC from the beginning stages (beams and girders) and continues step-by-step until it is a solid structure.

Victory At Sea (The Game)

To win, players must accomplish one of two tasks: destroy the enemy aircraft carrier or capture all of the more than 60 islands. Neither task is simple to accomplish. The enemy commander is very fast and intelligent. Players must build a supply network of islands to supply weapons, equipment, and fuel. In order to function, the player must maintain an unbroken chain of friendly islands as his supply line. Therefore, it is obvious that one useful tactic against the enemy carrier is to cut his supply lines. Of course, the computer-controlled opponent will be attempting to accomplish the same objective and it is very good at this.

The game offers two choices in play: an action game or a strategy game. In the purely action game, both the human player and computer opponent begin with several islands occupied and a complete supply network. Play begins with both forces only a short distance apart. This means that the optimal strategy is to immediately attack the enemy force. In the strategy game, both forces start with a few islands. From there, it is necessary to build a supply network, occupy enemy islands, and destroy the opposing carrier. The computer opponent *begins* with a supply network in place.

In both types of games, there is plenty of arcade-style action. Players may launch amphibious tanks and control them from the tank's viewpoint or fly advanced fighters a la *Starglider*. Even if players choose the strategy game and use the option which allows a set destination to be programmed for the planes, tanks or carrier, one will have to fire the weapons manually (arcade style). The limitation for the human player is that this means it is impossible to set a weapon for automatic fire. Therefore, he can only use one weapon at a time. This is not so with the computer opponent which launches multiple weapons at the human player by controlling aircraft and missiles at the same time.

Game control is handled via the mouse and joystick (or either alone). The joystick seems most efficient when controlling aircraft or tanks, but the mouse seems most efficient for moving from menu to menu. In addition to these viewpoint sequences, the player must also utilize the defensive options: decoy flares, turret-mounted laser, and carrier drones (decoys that give off heat signatures similar to carriers in order to lure enemy missiles away from the player's carrier).

Mysterious Island (Tactical Notes)

Occupying islands is no easy task. They have their own protection. The most difficult islands to take contain defense complexes. The robot engineers in defense com-

plexes will build Marauders (droid-controlled flying drones armed with heat-seeking missiles), missile launchers, and runways. Getting within missile range of a defense island can destroy the carrier itself. Therefore, the player must destroy the Marauder squadron. The most efficient way to do this is to use the carrier-based laser. This will necessitate closing range on the defense island while taking care to stay out of surface missile range. Once the Marauders are destroyed, players should have clear air superiority for the aircraft. It is then possible to take out surface missile installations and anti-aircraft batteries at will. Alert commanders will watch out for any attempts to rebuild the Marauders by the robot engineers in the defense complex. This reconstruction process can be avoided by strafing the ruins from time to time. Finally, once the defenses have been crushed, the carrier can launch a tank armed with a "Virus Bomb" to attack the complex itself. If successful, the entire island will be converted to the player's side. Other islands to conquer include resource islands, factory islands, and stockpile islands.

Players must remember to keep an eye on supplies, since the game cannot simply be reduced to combat. The occupied islands must be told what supplies to build and, at least, one island must be designated as a stockpile island. Players who concentrate on weapons and forget to provide for fuel or equipment will soon find themselves unable to continue. It is possible to actually lose all one's offensive hardware or run out of fuel. Further, players are advised to place their stockpile island (only one per side is allowed) relatively close to the front lines so it does not take long to resupply. Of course, it is equally important to surround it with several defense islands. The enemy will usually attack these first, before going after your stockpile island. This will hold true for your resource and factory islands.

Destroying the enemy carrier is also challenging. The strategy most successful for this reviewer involved finding the enemy and sitting outside of his range. Then, launch an aircraft loaded with air-to-air missiles in the direction of the enemy carrier. When your aircraft runs into the inevitable combat air patrol, it is easy to place two missiles in the midst of the enemy aircraft and fire the rest at the carrier. Naturally, the latter does minimal damage. Then, one can crash into the carrier in a reckless kamikaze style. Do this about four times, then center the laser and prepare to drive straight at the enemy. Send the decoy drones as a screen in front of the carrier and proceed directly at the enemy vessel at slow speed. Then, begin firing the laser as the carrier advances on the enemy. Ignore any attacks on the carrier until the bandit is completely destroyed.

From Here to Eternity (Conclusions)

Carrier Command is essentially an action game with a strategic wrap. Those who want to be able to both plan a strategy and implement it tactically will be pleased. Also, those who want an action game with improved graphics over the initial *Starglider* should like this game.

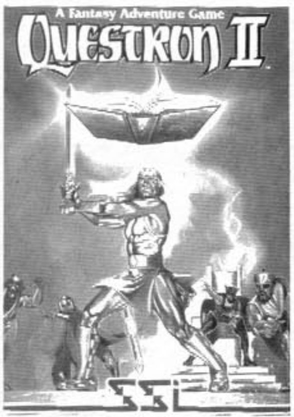
Scorpion's Mail

(Continued from page 21)

Might and Magic:

Some folks have been wondering how to read the lettered and numbered messages that appear in various places throughout the game. There are "keys" to reading them, both of which can be found (in different locations) in Castle Doom. They are not, of course, easy to find, but they are there, so keep looking (making a map helps).







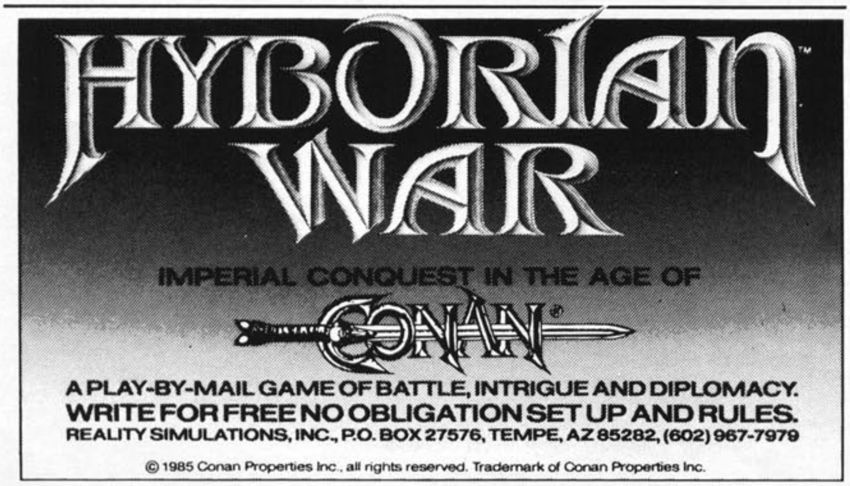
Questron II

I've had several inquiries on how to get into the Twilight Tomb. The key can be found pretty much where you'd expect it to be, namely somewhere in the second castle.

Bard's Tale I:

The riddle about "Past warscapes fought by men long dead" is giving some people trouble. A careful reading of the poem shows that the ends

(Continued on page 27)





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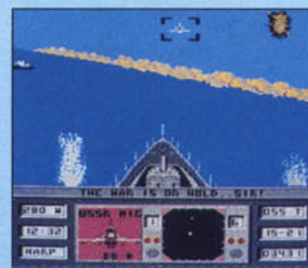


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Scorpion's Mail

(Continued from page 24)

of the lines rhyme, and there aren't too many words that rhyme with "fields". A little thought and the answer should be apparent (you don't have to solve this one to win the game, but you do get something nice). Also, several players have been getting ahead of themselves in this game, by moving on to another dungeon before finishing the current one, and then finding themselves stuck. You really must go completely through one dungeon before going on to the next, as each has something you will need in the next one. Further, there really is only one level to Kylearan's Tower.

Bard's Tale III:

The Gray Tower in Gelidia has proved to be a problem for a few people, particularly the part about the "broken cross." Careful mapping shows part of the cross at the top, and the other part at the bottom of the level, but no apparent means in. There is actually a way in, using a particular spell, but it will only work from one specific spot. This spot isn't too far from where you came in. Also, it is only the three towers and the area under the slab that are important in the fortress. The second level has nothing much in it (except monsters).

That seems to be it for the mailbag this time. Remember, if you need help you can reach me in the following ways:

On Delphi: Stop by the GameSIG (under the Groups and Clubs menu). On GEnie: Visit the Games RoundTable (type: SCORPIA to reach the Games RT). On The Source: Send SMail to ST1030. By US Mail (enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your questions if you live in the United States and want a reply): Scorpia, PO Box 338, Gracie Station, New York, NY 10028.

Until next time, happy adventuring!



STAR TREK®

THE REBEL UNIVERSE

by Hosea Battles

Captain's Log, Stardate 4107.6: The Enterprise has been ordered to investigate the portion of the Sagittarius Arm which has been designated as a "Quarantine Zone" by the Federation. To date, twenty starships have been sent to investigate this phenomenon and, as a result, all twenty have turned renegade, pledging allegiance to the Klingon Empire. The Federation has determined that the zone shall be isolated by means of a Klein Sphere, an interstellar barrier through which no material object can pass. The sphere will be erected as soon as the Enterprise *enters the zone. Our mission is to discover the cause of this mutiny and reverse its effects. In addition to Klingon involvement in these mysterious events, we know that several Romulan ships and planets exist in this Quarantine Zone. The Romulans have refused to cooperate with our investigation and the Rebel Federation Ships have vowed to stop us, as well. If we fail to solve the mystery, the Klein Sphere will be permanently established and the* Enterprise *will be trapped forever!*



TITLE:	Star Trek: The Rebel Universe
SYSTEM:	Atari ST, IBM (CGA)
# PLAYERS:	1
PRICE:	$39.95
DESIGNERS:	Steve Cain Graham Everett & Mike Singleton
PUBLISHER:	Simon & Schuster New York, NY

That is probably the way Captain Kirk would describe the situation which players find themselves in as they begin *Star Trek: The Rebel Universe* from **Simon & Schuster**. In a departure from their previous licensed releases, this product is a graphic adventure. On the ST, it is impressive, starting with the opening sequence. When you first boot the game, you hear the familiar words associated with the opening of the television series, a digitized version of Captain Kirk's voice followed immediately by the theme song. Throughout this game, there are digitized voices and sound effects from the television series. Unfortunately, the IBM graphics are mediocre and the sound is missing. Beyond the issue of graphics and sound, however, is the fact that the game has more than 4,000 planets to visit.

Star Fleet Reference Materials (Documentation)

The game's manual is divided into sections which explain different game functions and offer examples of the game screens. It also includes a glossary of devices and planetary systems to be encountered during the game. Following the "Sample Journey to a Planet" section can enable players to begin the game with a necessary piece of equipment which might otherwise be overlooked. A smaller manual lists the planets to be found in the game's universe and their coordinates.

"Computer, Report!" (The Game Interface)

The main game screen is composed of one central screen surrounded by seven smaller "viewscreens." When the player clicks on a screen (naturally, the ST uses its mouse, but the IBM allows for mouse, keyboard, or joystick), that screen becomes the central (active) screen. Each of the seven main characters from the television series (Kirk, Spock, Scotty, McCoy, Uhuru, Sulu, and Chekov) has a specific function which can be accessed by clicking on the screen. Captain Kirk's portrait enables the player to use the captain's log, save/load a game, evaluate ship's stores, or utilize the transporter. Spock's portrait provides information on the status of the ship, enemy vessels (during combat), and planetary environment or regions of space. Naturally, Scotty's portrait activates the engineering section, McCoy's image represents medical functions/status, Uhuru's picture calls up communications functions, Sulu's icon involves navigation functions, and Chekov's visage signals the use of weapons systems.

Recreation Deck (Game Play)

Movement is important to solving the mystery and travelling from planet to planet. By clicking on Sulu, the player can select the ship's destination and set the speed. Those tempted to travel at Warp 10 will soon discover that this can only be utilized for a short length of time. The warning should definitely be heeded when Scotty says, "If 'en we keep this speed, we'll blow up an'na minit' now!" The *Enterprise* must be slowed or the game will end abruptly.

Once a solar system has been entered, the solar system screen may be accessed from Sulu's caricature. Clicking on a planet elicits a description from Spock. If the planet is a "Life Supporting" planet, a landing party may be beamed down. Of course, some of these planets will aid in solving the mission and others will hinder the mission. For example, one planet has "Catastrophe Pods" which attach themselves to the ship

and take five weeks to mature thereupon. Should they mature, they will burst, consume the ship, and devour everything in it. There is only way to save the ship.

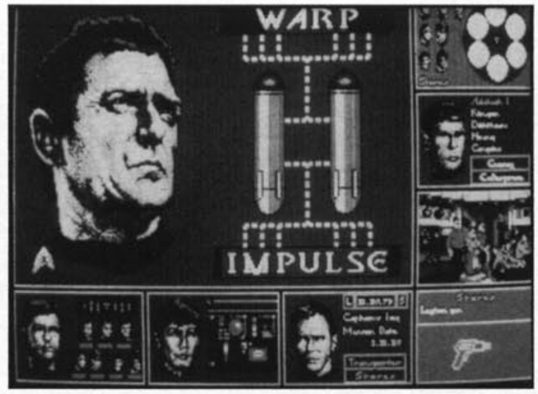
Note that most of the adventure will take place on "Life Supporting" planets, but not all systems will have a "Life Supporting" planet. Once the *Enterprise* enters orbit around the planet, the player will hear Sulu's digitized voice saying, "Now in standard orbit, sir." Now, the captain's icon can be chosen in order to "enter" the ship's stores and select equipment for the landing party. Then, the party may be transported to the surface. Once planetside, each crewmember will have certain actions they can perform. Only one of these actions will successfully get the party past the obstacles they will encounter on these planets. These obstacles may be doors or forcefields. Don't believe everything you hear about them, however. For example, if Spock analyzes a door and tells the Captain that it takes a Helix Gun to open the door, the party can usually get past the door by using a phaser blast.

Once the player is past the major obstacle, it is usually possible to find one or two objects which will be needed to complete the mission. Once these artifacts/objects have been found, players have the option of "beaming" the item up or taking the item with the party. Any items that need to be installed in the *Enterprise* in order to be operative will be automatically installed when the party "beams up."

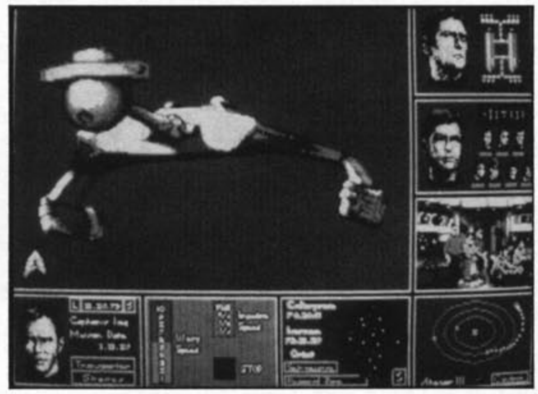
There are several planets that will aid in solving the mission. First, the *Enterprise* can only receive special help at planets aligned with the Federation. Would-be Captain Kirks will need to find a Federation Weapons Dump in order to replenish their supplies of photon torpedoes. In addition, it takes a Federation Energy Refinery Planet to replenish all or part of the energy needed for the impulse engines and a Federation Dilithium Mining Planet is necessary for finding enough dilithium crystals to operate the warp engines. There is also a Repair Drone Dock which enables the damage to the *Enterprise* to be repaired and a Planetary Supermind which causes all weapons in its system to be rendered inactive and hence, offers a respite from combat.

Red Alert (Combat Mechanics)

Combat occurs whenever enemy vessels enter the same star system as the *Enterprise* is in. The first indication players have is the sound of the "Red Alert Klaxon" and a detailed picture of the enemy vessel making an attack run. The annoying alert sound can be toggled off by clicking on the red bar. Then, clicking on Chekov's image brings up the combat screens. This is where the game offers something of the flavor of an arcade game. To enter combat, players must go to the "tracking grid" and click on an approaching vessel. The vessel appears on a combat screen with a crosshair imposed on it. This is, in fact, the only time players will see vector graphics in the game, because the enemy ships appear as vector graphics during the combat routines. When the player feels like the crosshair is correctly positioned in an optimal location over the enemy vessel, he simply clicks the mouse button and the digitized voice of Chekov tells him that he is "Locked on target!"



Should the player destroy the enemy, Chekov will say "Got 'Em!" and the enemy vessel will spin and fade away. The phasers have a limited number of shots before they have to recharge and if they are fired in rapid succession, there are only four shots possible. Players have 50 photon torpedoes, but these must be replenished at a Federation Weapons Dump Planet. Also, remember that, since the enemy has shields, it will usually take several shots to destroy his vessel.





Command Briefing (Strategy and Hints)

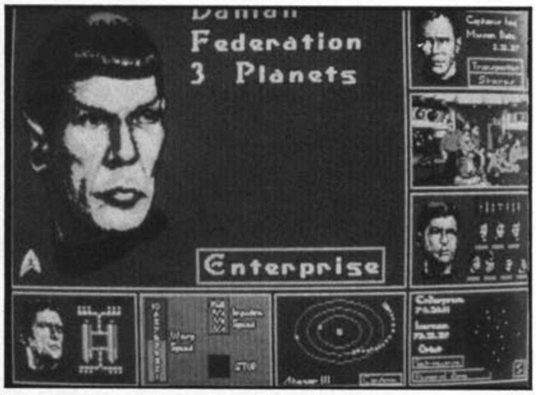
Frankly, those who get caught up in the arcade sequences of combat and simply maneuver around spoiling for a fight will never finish the game successfully. There are eight different ways to win the game. This reviewer destroyed Dekian II. Other paths to victory include: capturing or blackmailing the Klingon admiral; delivering an antidote to rebel commanders which makes them loyal Federation officers once again; destroying the Klingon Psimitter or constructing a Federation Psimitter; interrupting Klingon communications; or releasing a "peace virus."

The following are some tips which can be effective in winning the game.

1) Make a checklist of planets using the booklet in the documentation. Include a section for listing devices found in a system and at what planet.

2) Some systems can only be reached by following a specific path. Write down a list of systems you warp to, in order to retrace your path to a particular system if you should need to.

3) Make a separate list of Orbital Discontinuum systems, so you can quickly find them when you have to get rid of Catastrophe Pods.



4) Save the game often.

5) When doing battle, remember that phasers have to recharge. Use them sparingly. Use your four shots, then immediately switch to Photon Torpedoes.

6) Find the following items: Hotshot Device (increases weapons accuracy), Chaff Emitter (decreases battle damage), Solar Scan Device (tells how many enemy ships are in a system), and Cerenkov Crystal (gives more efficient use of Dilithium Crystals). These items will help you survive longer.

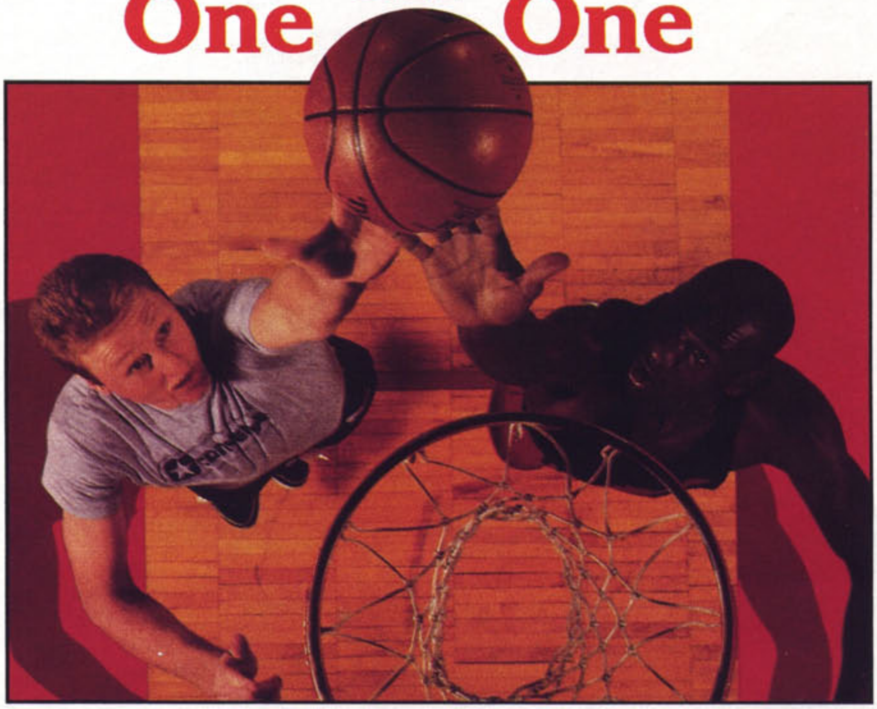
7) Finally, fight only when necessary! Don't look for a fight. When you enter a system, immediately go to the Star Globe screen and set course for another system. Just don't execute that order immediately. That way, should you be attacked and find yourself overwhelmed, all you have to do is go to the Warp/Impulse drive screen and warp out. You only need to warp out for a few seconds in order to recharge phasers and rejoin the battle. Just click on "Stop" in the Warp/Impulse drive screen. Enemy ships will not warp out after you.



Captain's Recommendations

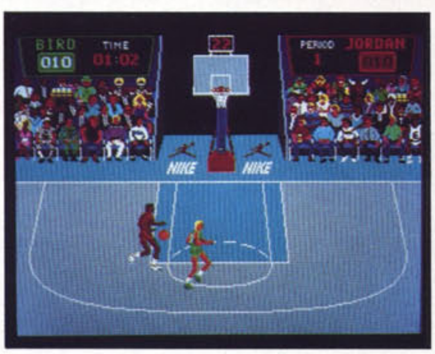
Overall, this can be described as an excellent adventure game for the ST. Though some will claim that it is simply a "cosmic scavenger hunt," this reviewer feels that it has enough action and puzzles to satisfy most adventure gamers. For those who are *Star Trek* fans, there should be no question about the need to add this game to your collection.

Michael Jordan and CGW Go One on One



The little finger brushed across the right arrow key, while the other hand jammed the shift key. Michael Jordan brushed past Larry Bird in a blur, putting the ball to the floor with the authority that comes from being the league's MVP. Bird moved to recover position, but it was too late. *The thumb pressed down on the "Insert/0" key of the numeric keypad.* Jordan launched into the air like Superman leaping a skyscraper. *The thumb released the "Insert/0" key,* just as Jordan reached the apex of his leap and released the ball toward the basket for a perfect swish.

That's the way the one-on-one action of *Larry Bird and Michael Jordan Go One on One* can be played with the keyboard. Of course, the sequel to the hit arcade game *Dr. J. and Larry Bird Go One on One* can also be played with a joystick. In fact, the game's non-celebrity designers differ on the preferred controllers. Garth Hitchens, who did most of the programming, prefers the keyboard. Mark Madland, who interfaces the game's graphics and game concepts, prefers the joystick. Both require a sense of rhythm. As in "real" basketball, timing is an essential aspect to this game.





Yet, the new game offers a lot more than its ancestor (which sold more than 400,000 units and rates as the number one best-selling computer sports game). The new incarnation still provides such familiar features as the shattering backboard (albeit not as frequently), but also provides: EGA color, capacity for playing on both the older (slower) and newer (faster) processors, ability to handicap the computer opponent for better solitaire play (four difficulty levels), smoother animation with more realistic graphics, colorful animated crowd scene with personalities from other EA hits (and a few surprises), a "rockin'" soundtrack by Rob Hubbard, a "Boss Screen" that pauses the game, two specialized contests ("Slam Dunk" and "3-Point"), and the use of digitized photos with congratulatory messages from the celebrities when the player does something well in the specialized contests (the opposite of Yeager's caustic quips in the *Advanced Flight Trainer*).

In fact, the one-on-one game is good, smooth, and playable, but it may actually be the specialized contests that sell this game. The "Slam Dunk Contest" features Michael Jordan, complete with knee pad and sweatband. In fact, this was the area where Jordan really came to life in the design sessions. He even added the "skin your head" dunk and some others to the "dunks" available. In fact, we know he added those features because we interviewed him.

CGW: Michael, we saw you play against the Lakers at the Forum a few months ago and and the crowd cheered like a bunch of Chicago fans every time you got your hands on the ball.

Michael Jordan: Well, all over the league, they give me respect. I think that's because fans enjoying watching a person play the game the way I do.

CGW: *We* sure do. Now, to start off this interview, we wondered if you had played the original *Dr. J and Larry Bird go One on One* computer game?

Michael Jordan: No. So, I can't talk about the original game, but the new one looks like a pretty interesting game. I never knew that games existed with such details and knowledge of the game. I'm looking forward to getting my own machine and playing it.

CGW: Then, have you ever played any computer games and do you have any favorites?

Michael Jordan: One of the "Bulls" has a golf game we like to play.

CGW: Getting down to specifics, how would you defend against Larry Bird in real life or in the game?

Michael Jordan: Against Larry Bird, I would have to play more aggressively on the perimeter. I would get up close and make him drive. I think I'm quick enough to play him pretty good on the perimeter. I wouldn't let him get the outside shot. I'd take my chances that way. Against myself, I would try to make myself take the outside jump shot.

CGW: One of the interesting things about the game seems to be that both yourself and Larry have a different style of play. It would seem that this would make the game more interesting than if you were both outside shooters or both liked to drive to the basket. Would you agree?

Michael Jordan: I think it is very interesting that each person in the game has a weakness and a strength. Individuals playing the game can either discover this by playing the game or by watching Larry and myself play. The fun of it is when one individual can stay away from the weakness and stay with the strength or force the other player to go with the weakness and stay away from the strength.

CGW: What is the best way to defend the turnaround jumper?

Michael Jordan: Just hope he's not hitting. (laughter) It's pretty difficult, but you will want to keep a hand in his face or a hand in my face. It's pretty hard to keep a player such as Larry or myself from shooting the basketball once we get in a position to use a turnaround jumper. Just try to keep a hand in his face.

CGW: What are the "keys" you look for in the defensive player before you go to the basket?

Michael Jordan: I check his footwork and see if his feet are in a fundamentally sound position. I depend on my knowledge of the game and quickness to beat him and if his footwork is sound, it is much more difficult.

CGW: So, your eyes are on his feet quite a bit?

Michael Jordan: Yes.

CGW: When playing the computer game, as Michael Jordan, what do you feel is the best strategy in going one on one?

Michael Jordan: As myself, I feel you have to go for the jump shot, first. Once the jump shot is going well, that opens up all the rest of my game. I think driving [to the basket] is my strength and if I can hit my weakness, which is my jump shot, then all the phases of my game will be wide open.

CGW: Who are the three NBA players who play you toughest on defense?

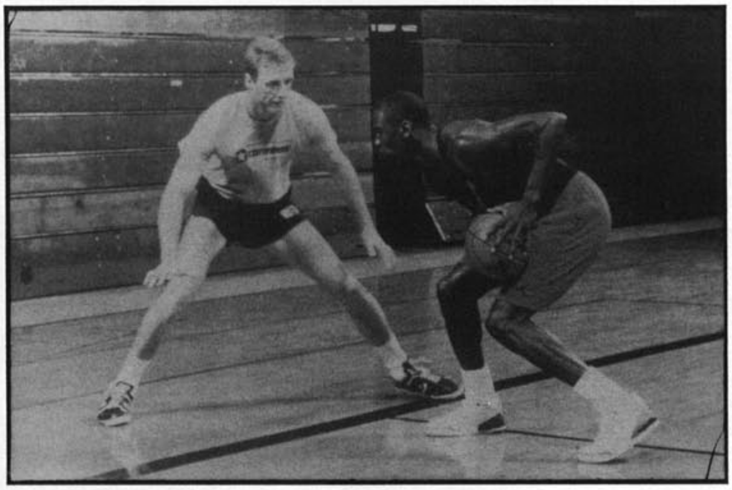
Michael Jordan: Joe Dumars of Detroit is number one; Michael Cooper of the Lakers is second; and T. R. Dunn of Denver is third.

CGW: It has been said that, perhaps, you shoot too much. How do you respond to that?

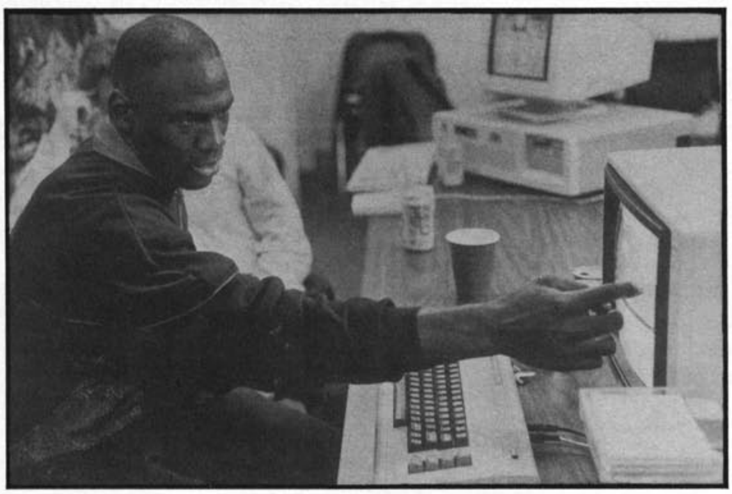
Michael Jordan: I think that's just the way that people perceived that one year when I averaged thirty-some points a game and shot 28-30 times per game. I'm simply trying to fulfil my role and contribute to my team the best way I can. At the present time, that means more offense than anything. At the same time, I think my shooting [number of shots per game] has gone down, but I'm hitting over 53%, as well. I think those figures offer good odds and the critics ought to consider those stats and the role I'm supposed to play on my team, as well.

CGW: It's hard to argue with success, isn't it? Finally, with regard to **Electronic Arts** and the production of this game, what specific elements did you contribute that would not have been there without your input?

Michael Jordan: First of all, the shooting percentages and my favorite shots from different areas on the court. I told them all of that. The dunking and all of the different creative dunks were developed in one of the sessions. Certain one-on-one moves, my weaknesses and strong points from my point-of-view, and all of these things were points I tried to instill in the game.



Larry & Michael Go One-On-One (above) While Michael Points To One of His "Sweet Spots" on the Computer Screen (below).



CGW: That's the end of our prepared questions, but we have one more. Now that the Lakers have won back-to-back championships, do you think they can do it again or are you going to knock them off?

Michael Jordan: It's possible that they could do it again. I think it's more mental than anything. They sure have a good enough team to do to win the World Championship, but it's not physical anymore, it's all mental. If they can prepare themselves mentally for the challenge they have to face, they could do it again. I'm not ruling that out. I sure hope they don't. I hope that we can win it next year, but then, that's the challenge of the whole NBA.

Sneaky Return to Preview

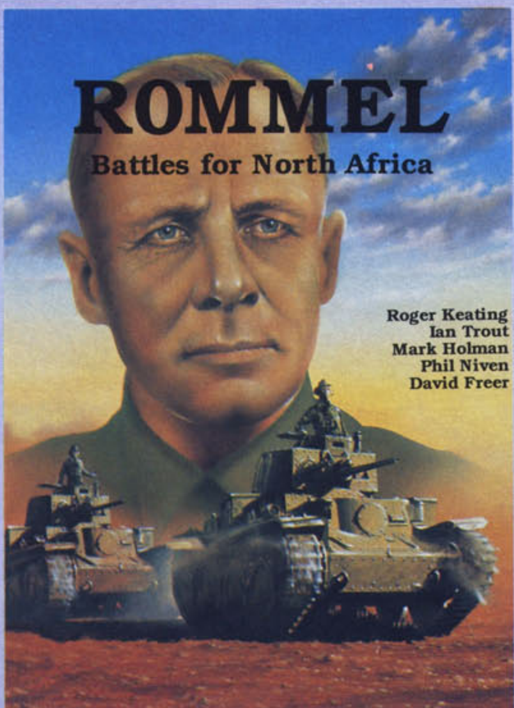
The "3-Point Contest" features Larry Bird attempting to empty several bins of basketballs into the bucket from three-point range during a limited time period.

Both games require the proverbial "split-second" timing, but in this case, it is literally true. Both contests are animated at 13 frames per second. In the "3-Point Contest," the player must release the ball within one of those frames (1/13th of a second) for a perfect shot. In the "Slam Dunk Contest," the perfect shot must occur within two frames (2/13th of a second) for a perfect shot.

It is certainly to be expected that *Michael Jordan and Larry Bird Go One on One* will find the same basic action-oriented audience it found before, and then some. This new version of an old familiar favorite is like getting three new games instead of one.

Strategic Studies Group Presents

The Legend of the Desert Fox



By January 1941, the War in North Africa was going very badly for the Axis powers. The Italian army had been routed out of Egypt and almost out of Libya.

A small German force was scraped together to try and stem the tide. Command of this force was given to General Irwin Rommel. . . and for the next two years, outnumbered and poorly supplied, the Desert Fox out-witted and out-generalled all of his foes.

ROMMEL recreates his greatest victories as well as other battles from the North African Theatre. You can command either Axis or Allied forces against human or computer opponents in the battles of. . .

Syria Sidi Rezegh Cauldron
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The ***Battlefront Game System*** mechanics are so simple to use, you will be issuing orders like a veteran within ten minutes of assuming command.

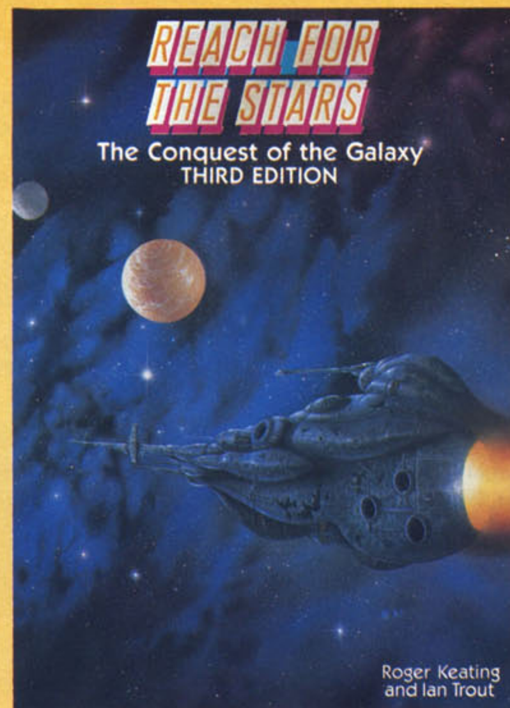
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Reach for the Stars is Strategic Studies Group's all-time classic game of space exploration and conquest. The third edition contains two great games in one; the original ***Reach for the Stars*** and an entirely new scenario, with lots of options for advanced play.

Whichever game you choose to play, you're in for a tough time. It's a four-cornered contest for domination of the galaxy and there's only one winner. The computer plays all places not taken by humans and it never gives anyone an even break.

To win a game of ***Reach for the Stars*** you must have explored all of the galaxy and colonized the choicest portions. You will have expanded your industry, engaged in frantic R&D, and produced a large space navy. This will have been employed in settling territorial disputes with your neighbours. As always, the person with the biggest navy gets to adjust the border.

It's not as easy as it sounds. Do the wrong thing and it could be three against one, especially if you're playing against Keating's Enhanced Veteran computer players. They just don't like you to start with, and can get really annoyed if you mess with them. That's why there are Beginner and Experienced players on which to first practice your galactic domination skills.

Whatever your qualifications as a space tyrant, ***Reach for the Stars*** is guarantied to be totally addictive. . .

Available now for IBM, Amiga, IIgs, Macintosh, Apple II Family and C64/128 computers.
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The Computer As Tutor

Our Second Annual Bibliography of Educational Games

October is **Computer Learning Month** and *Computer Gaming World* is proud to be one of the sponsors. This annotated bibliography is a supplement to the list originally published in October, 1987 (#40). For those who would like a photocopy of the original list, simply send a #10 stamped envelope to:
Computer Gaming World's
Educational Games List
P.O. Box 4566
Anaheim, CA 92803-4566.
We will send it free of charge.

Preschool

ABC's
Polarware $14.95-$17.95 (Apple II, C-64/128, IBM)

Part of Polarware's "Electric Crayon" series, this product allows children to use a point and click interface in order to "paint" pictures and learn the letters of the alphabet. Other products in the series include "Fun On The Farm" and "This Land Is Your Land."

Counting Critters
Mindscape $39.95 (Apple II, IIGS)

In this game, animated "critters" fill the screen, the child/student counts the number of strange creatures, and he/she enters the correct number. A similar approach is used with "Knowing Numbers" and "Shapes and Patterns," companion products for the same age group. Laboratory packages are available for teachers.

First Letters and Words
First Byte (EA) $30.00-$37.50 (Amiga, Apple IIGS, Atari ST, IBM, Macintosh)

Four different games and a talking (speech synthesized) bear teach letters, keyboard positions, initial consonants, upper and lower case, and simple vocabulary. "Who Am I?" (a guessing game which teaches initial consonants) and "Dinosaur Surprise" (a game which teaches vocabulary by completing pictures of dinosaurs) should prove most popular. "First Shapes" is another title in the series.

Joshua's Reading Machine
Compu-Teach $39.95 (Apple II, IIGS, IBM, Macintosh)

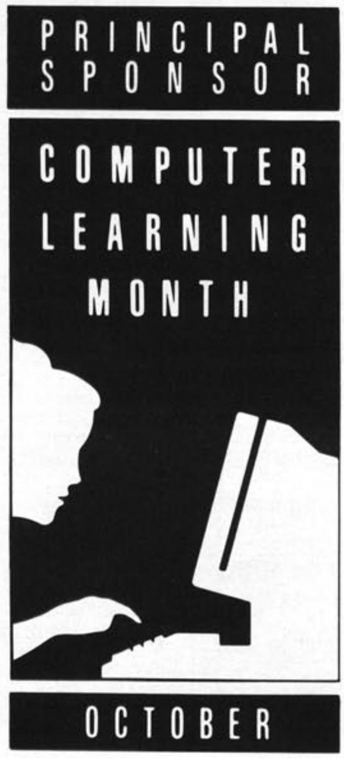
Joshua the giraffe, a cartoon-like character, is the host of this reading comprehension program. The program uses nursery rhymes, children's songs, and classical fables to encourage better reading. Early screens are semi-rebus in nature, combining pictures, music, and text. The program grows with the child by utilizing nine difficulty levels.

Math and Me
Davidson $39.95 (Apple II (128K), IIGS ($49.95), IBM)

From learning about "Shapes," "Patterns," and "Numbers" to "Beginning Addition," cute little monkeys lead children through three different learning games per subject. The games are established so that the program grows with the child. The IIGS version uses digitized speech. "Reading and Me" is available in the same series.

Mixed-Up Mother Goose
Sierra $29.95 (Apple IIGS, IBM)

Designed to be an early childhood adventure game, rather than an educational product per se, this adventure for youngsters (age three and older) combines two learning goals: introducing children to the literature called nursery rhymes and developing problem-solving skills. If the children happen to enjoy themselves immensely, so much the better.



Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood: Many Ways to Say I Love You
Mindscape $29.95 (Apple II, C-64/128)

Think of this product as an early childhood creativity tool. Children use the program to create personalized greeting cards and learn to get in touch with their feelings.

Richard Scarry's Best Electronic Word Book Ever
Mindscape $29.95 (Apple II, C-64/128)

Parents who enjoy reading to their children will probably recognize the colorful characters from the fecund imagination of Richard Scarry. The product teaches object recognition, fosters word/object association, and builds basic vocabulary through four levels of difficulty.

Numbers Count
Polarware $14.95-$17.95 (Apple II (128K), C-64/128, IBM)

The Count from Sesame Street is the master of ceremonies for this product in the "Sesame Street Crayon" series. Other basic concepts in learning are covered in "Letters For You" and "Opposites Attract."

Stepping Stones
Compu-Teach $39.95 (Apple II, IBM, Macintosh)

Two products are offered in this series. The first is an introduction to letters, numbers, and words. The second offers early reading games and addition games. These are primarily of the "Select the correct answer" type games.

Tink's Adventure
Mindscape $19.95 (Apple II, C-64/128, IBM)

This is the first in a series which teaches alphabet recognition, visual patterns, and simple vocabulary. The format is not exactly a game, but the look of the screen and the instant feedback is similar. Other titles are "Tonk in the Land of Buddy-Bots" and "Tuk Goes to Town."

Primary Grades

Ace Explorer
Mindplay $49.95 (Apple II)

Along with "Ace Reporter" and "Ace Detective," this is one of a series of graphic text adventures that teach specific types of reading comprehension. By creatively solving problems in various stories, these products stimulate both writing and reading skills.

Math Blaster Plus
Davidson $49.95 (Apple II, IIGS, IBM)

Five different learning games based on an outer space theme offer an incentive for children to master basic mathematical operations. In the "Blasternaut" game, students move an animated astronaut to the correct answer to a mathematics problem displayed on the screen.

Once Upon A Time . . .
Compu-Teach $39.95 (Apple II, IIGS, IBM, Macintosh)

This program enables primary grade children to design and "publish" their own illustrated storybooks. Three story formats are included with the package, "Main Street," "Farm," and "Safari."

Reader Rabbit
The Learning Company $54.95-$64.95 (Apple II, IIGS, C-64/128, IBM)

Four games in one product gently lead the child through a 200+ word vocabulary consistent with the early reading program in most schools. The game screens look like arcade games, but the players progress by means of letter, pattern, and vocabulary recognition.

See The U.S.A.
Compu-Teach $49.95 (Apple II (128K), IBM)

This game recreates cross-country trips by means of geography quizes. The inclusion of a quiz editor enables the game to be customized and updated so that it never grows stale.

The Spy's Adventures in North America
Polarware $17.95-$19.95 (Apple II, C-64/128, IBM)

This is a graphic adventure series that teaches facts about geography as children chase Dr. X. Tortion over various continents. One advantage of these products is the fact that the games can be played with up to six different people.

Where in Europe is Carmen Sandiego?
Broderbund $39.95-$44.95 (Apple II (128K), C-64/128, IBM)

The latest in the popular series, this game enables players to chase clues about Carmen through 34 European countries. The game even includes a special concise atlas from Rand McNally.

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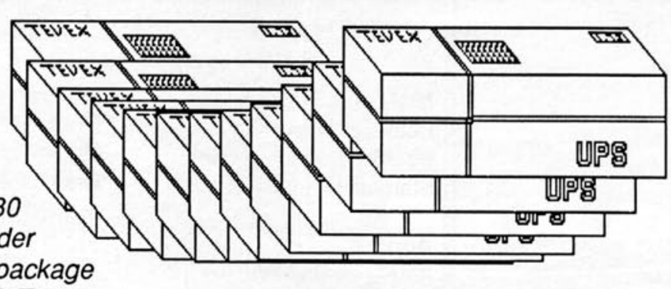
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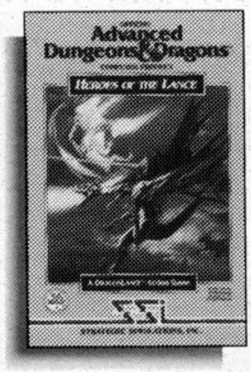
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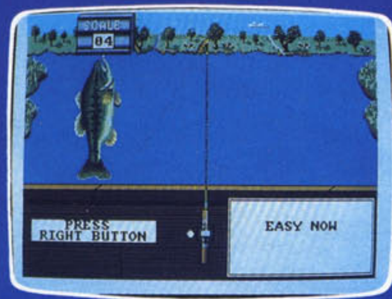
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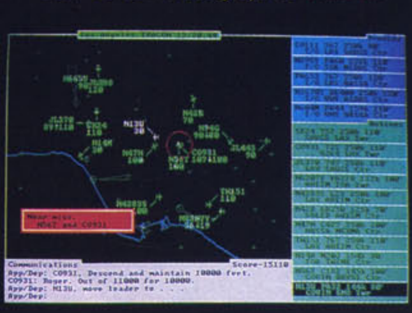
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EGA Screen Photograph of TRACON



Working On Those Knight Moves

by David M. Wilson

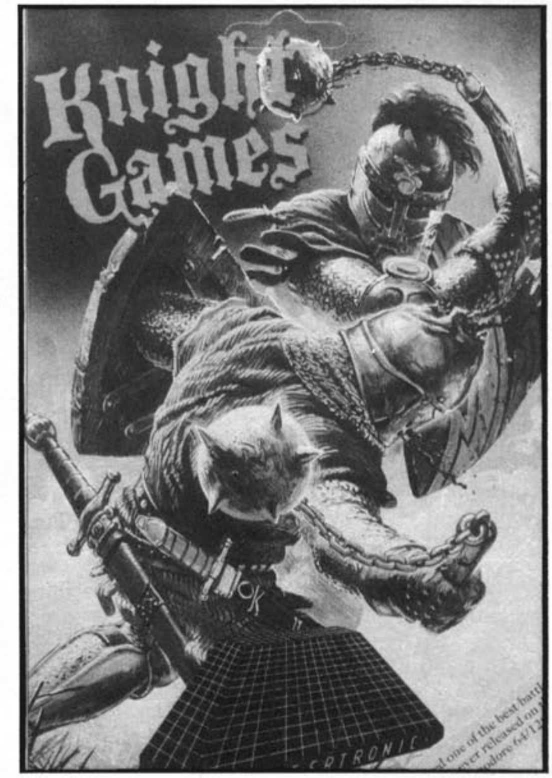
The white knight fiercely slammed his shield into his opponent's faceplate. His adversary reeled backward, uselessly attempting to raise his shield. The white knight's sword clashed against the winded foe's shield, knocking it momentarily aside. "Yield!" he demanded. His rival dropped wearily to his knees. "I yield, Sir Knight," he conceded.

Swords, battle axes, quarterstaves, and maces are the short range weapons available for Medieval dueling in **Mastertronic**'s *Knight Games* for the C-64/128. Those inclined to take the ranged weapon approach can choose between a crossbow or longbow competition. Whatever the weapon selection, players have the benefit of competing against either a computer or human opponent. Frankly, the computer opponent is tough enough that most players will be looking for humans to challenge. Nevertheless, the game offers both options.

Each event depicted offers a radically different background against which the duel takes place, but there is a definite similarity to the arcade action. Whether the knight is swinging a broadsword or a quarterstaff, the character's movement remains the same. This is a minor drawback, but the game is enough fun that one can get beyond any dissatisfaction.

The battles do not require a great deal of coordination, but a sense of timing is important. A player can win an occasional round by simply swinging his weapon back and forth at a furious pace, but this will prove to be the exception rather than the rule. In most fights, it is effective for a player to step back several times, wait for his opponent to draw back his weapon to attack, and then, lunge forward and deliver the *coup de grace*. While this strategy is often effective, it is highly recommended that it be reserved for that point when the opponent is weakened and almost defeated (which players can determine from a strength point display to the right of the action screen).

Should a player defeat his opponent before the time allotted to the round is over, he will be given a new opponent. This opponent is fresh and at full strength, while the player's knight has just been in battle and may even be wounded to the extent that he cannot possibly win the battle. This adds a unique realism to the game. In order to become the "Champion Knight," the player's knight will have had to face well-rested and unwounded opponents.

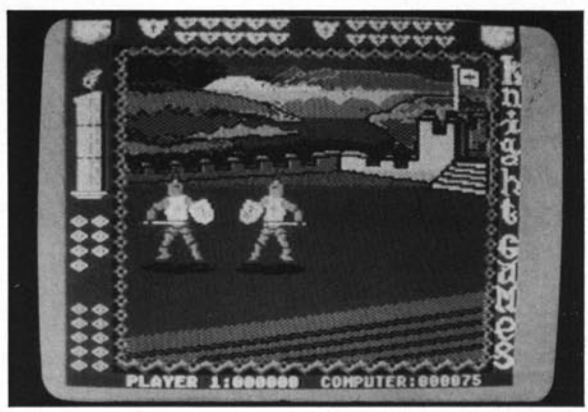


Of course, it isn't quite as realistic when it works the other way. If a player faces a tough opponent and has knocked him down to half-strength when the player character is "killed," a new player character can return as a fresh knight and battle the opponent's half-strength knight. At least, both knights fall prey to the same limitations.

In the archery contests, players are really only shooting against themselves and the clock. Players simply position the crosshair on the appropriate target and launch their arrows or bolts toward the bull's-eye.

TITLE:	Knight Games
SYSTEM:	C-64/128
# PLAYERS:	1-2
PRICE:	$9.95
DESIGNERS:	Colin Brown, Phillip Morris, and Jon Williams
PUBLISHER:	Mastertronic Costa Mesa, CA

Players may choose between three different difficulty levels. The major factor involved is the amount of time the player has to fight in order to become champion. Each advance in difficulty requires a proportionate advance in stamina and endurance. There is very little difference in the computer opponent's skill level (if any).



Knight Games will probably prove more popular with the younger teen set because of its ease of play, rousing score (the box calls it Medieval "Rock Music" and it sounds good to this reviewer's ears), and the multitude of weapon choices available. Of course, adult fans of action games will want to try it for some of the same reasons.

Knight Games is proof positive that budgetware doesn't have to be garbageware.

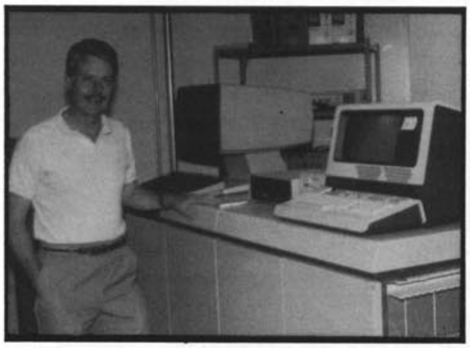
Fantastic Voyages

A Tour Inside the fast-growing Entertainment Industry





(Counterclockwise from top): Electonic Arts' headquarters, This building has been destroyed many times by F/A-18 Interceptor players; Cubicle sweet cubicle: Everyone's office at E.A.; Eric Walter shows off the HP 3000, which has generated the shipment of more than $150 million of E.A. games; E.A.'s customer support area where game questions are answered, dog-bitten disks are replaced, and proposals of marriage may be accepted.





The New Hollywood

Trip Hawkins, founder and CEO of **Electronic Arts**, expanded upon his vision of "The New Hollywood" during the Spring Symposium of the **Software Publishers Association** in March of 1988. He posited a bright future when the mass market will discover entertainment software, a new era with a cross-fertilization of creative talent from around the world, an expanding horizon of huge technical advances in everything from processors, storage, and interface, and a vibrant community where artists are recognized and appreciated. "Entertainment is one of the biggest differences between us and the apes," the charismatic entrepreneur reminded the software industry and promised that a future is coming where ". . the tail will wag the dog." Hawkins firmly believes that an era will come when the hardware companies will cater to the software corporations, instead of vice-versa (the present situation).

With such a vision in our minds, the editorial staff at *CGW* embarked on a whirlwind tour of many of the software companies. We felt a need to see the work environments of these new entertainment studios; to find out what kinds of artist communities these publishing companies are; and get an idea of where the industry is headed. This multi-part series is intended to take our readers "Inside The Industry" and provide some picture of what it is like to work for a software publisher.

At **Electronic Arts**, the emphasis is upon community. Everyone from Trip Hawkins and the corporate vice-presidents on down through the corporate structure use ubiquitous cubicles for their office space. Even Trip's own Mercedes does not have an assigned parking space. The intended purpose of this "no frills" approach is to create a corporate structure that is open and accessible.

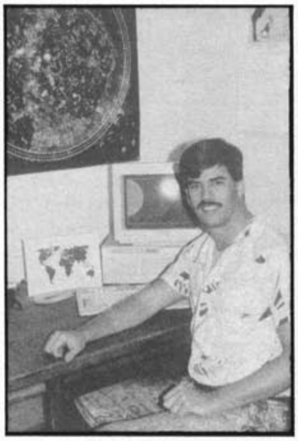
The company emphasizes the fact that it *is* a culture. As a culture, each employee pledges to uphold the value system. "The Values," as the corporate ideals are referred to, include: teamwork, integrity, vision, innovation, quality, and achievement. There is even a culture club (no relation to the popular rock group) to enhance the sense of community with creative methods of employee interaction. Besides the "Doers Profiles" on cubicle walls (a spoof on the **Dewar's Profiles** in the liquor ads where people tell about their hobbies, interests, and recent activities), the club sponsors off-site outings as a means of encouraging interaction. One producer confided to *CGW* that where most programmers seem to live on pizza and soft drinks, **EA** was the first software company he had worked at where there were lots of people interested in fine food and beverage. Other employees suggested that they loved the impromptu company videos. *CGW* was privileged to enjoy an in-house video called *RoboRuth*, a clever spoof on *RoboCop* in which their facilities supervisor was the cyborg protagonist. In fact, company meetings are held every Friday and offer a chance to let off steam, socialize and network, as well as become enthused about the future. Attendees shouldn't be surprised at anything that happens, whether it should be an impromptu awards ceremony or a nerfball fight.

One of our goals at several of the companies was to meet the folks in the Customer Support Departments. Usually nestled adjacent to the Testing/Quality Assurance departments, these patient a personable individuals are the ones whose voices our readers hear when they phone in for *Bard's Tale III* hints, disk replacements, or compatibility problems. Paulette Doudell is the person in charge of customer support for **EA**. She is a vivacious individual with a huge cache of entertaining stories. She told CGW of one of her phone answerers who kept giving hints to the same individual over and over. In fact, even after the individual had finished the game, he kept calling the customer support line to talk with this young lady. The customer actually proposed marriage to the **EA** employee over the phone.

Disk replacement is also a popular source of humorous material. Disks can be damaged in the most incredible ways. For example, the company has replaced

(Clockwise from upper right): Funds being collected for the annual New World Saturnalia; Ron Spitzer asks Asst. Ed. Wilson, "Furniture? The other companies have furniture?"; Part of the New World staff, including celebrity impersonator; Steve Cox works on "Space: The Game". (Light years away!)









everything from an *Adventure Construction Set* damaged in a midwestern flood to a mutilated *Seven Cities of Gold* disk eaten by a dog.

On the business side, Eric Walter is the Vice-President of Operations. In addition to overseeing typical accounting procedures, Eric's department makes certain that the raw materials necessary for product and packaging are in the pipeline when needed. Although the company makes its products for personal computers, the computer that is foundational for the business end of the company is its HP 3000 (68 series) which had assisted in the shipping of more than $150,000,000 in merchandise.

On the technological side, **EA** has always been excited about new innovation. One of the most exciting developments on the horizon is Compact Disk - Interactive. Greg Riker is the lead man for that concept at **Electronic Arts** and seems to have a tremendous handle on what that technology is going to do in the industry. Since CD-I is a design specification rather than a specific machine, any hardware company could build one. Hence, this may be the best chance yet for hardware standardization of an interactive entertainment device. Like many in the industry, Riker believes Christmas, 1989 is not an unrealistic delivery point for the first few CD-I machines and is gearing up his unit to be ready for that contingency. Although many of the products presumed under development cannot be revealed, *CGW* was impressed with the development system Riker has put together.

Rick Tiberi is the CD-I program organizer at **EA**. He is in charge of creating development tools in an object-oriented programming environment that will eventually allow the team to cut development time in half. We were impressed by Rick's "Runtime Interpreter" which actually let his code run *without* being compiled. Greg and Rick are just two of the men who are trying to make the company slogan, "We See Farther!" as true today as it was when the corporation was founded.

We think that one of the most insightful and visual anecdotes about **EA**'s leadership involves a recent earthquake. It seems that Trip Hawkins felt the earth rocking and rolling; glanced over the top of his cubicle; stepped up on his chair; and proceeded to raise his fist in the air and shout, "Go, Earth, Go!" Whether fearless or foolish, there was Mr. Hawkins with the earth shifting beneath his feet and raising his voice to cheer the elements. That's quite an image!

A Bold New World

Some software companies are huge entities which began with a diversified product line. Others are largely the outgrowth of one man's vision. **New World Computing** began with one product, one vision, and one programmer. The company, one of **Mediagenic**'s Affiliated Publishers, is founded on Jon Van Caneghem's popular creation, *Might and Magic*. Now, it is a haven for gamers, a womb of creativity for board game designers and computer programmers to interact.

The work hours are not structured and management doesn't have to worry about getting work out of the employees. In fact, Ron Spitzer finds himself having to be as concerned about the employees' nutritional and rest habits as he is about business matters and product concerns. Even after the company *Might and Magic* built acquired **Task Force Games**, the board game company most noted for *Star Fleet Battles*, there is a desire among the principals at **New World** that the workplace stay loose, friendly, and creative.

Like the larger corporations, **New World** has had its share of customer support headaches. In fact, everyone takes turns on the customer support lines. As for updates, the company found that the original C-64 version of *Might and Magic* had a programming problem that actually made the game easier to play. Some dedicated gamers wanted an update which made the game tougher, so the company offered a update for $1.00. The company filled a large five gallon bottle with the dollar bills from that offer, allegedly for a company picnic or some other communal activity.

In another similarity to the larger corporations, **New World** is under the intense pressure to expand its product line. *Might and Magic II* was a given, but the company hired new programmers to work on a game originally titled *Project X* and, later, entitled *Space: The Game*. With the company's intent to publish a computer version of *Tunnels & Trolls* and *Nukewar!*, the space project is on a back burner. Yet, the important fact is clear. **New World Computing** is expanding.

On the day *CGW* visited **New World**'s fast growing facility, the company was eagerly awaiting the delivery of the **Task Force Games** inventory and remodeling. We questioned Spitzer about the logic of acquiring a board game company. The company executive admitted that the potential profits from **Task Force** are miniscule, but suggested that the company would serve its parent company well by allowing board game development to be a "proving ground for systems." Asked directly about possible computer versions of **Task Force** board games, Spitzer replied that games like *BattleWagon*, a game of naval warfare, and *Grand Army of the Republic* would make interesting computer games, but there were absolutely no plans for doing straight board game to computer game conversions.

From Here To Cinemaware

Bob Jacob is a former software agent. In that role, he warned designers against software publishers " . . . who have adopted a 'wait and see' attitude toward the Macintosh and the Amiga." (*CGW* 5.1 (February, 1985), p. 18). He continued to push the issue by stating in that same article, "There's no time to wait for trends. You've got to create trends and hope you're right."

Since writing that article for us, Bob has gone on to form **Cinemaware**, a company that embodies the philosophy he laid out in the pages of *CGW*. Today, **Cinemaware** is known for visually and aurally stimulating the 16-bit world. Nevertheless, the company is not standing still. True to its name, the company is building upon its cinematic roots, hiring cross-over talent, and attempting to prepare for the next technological challenge.

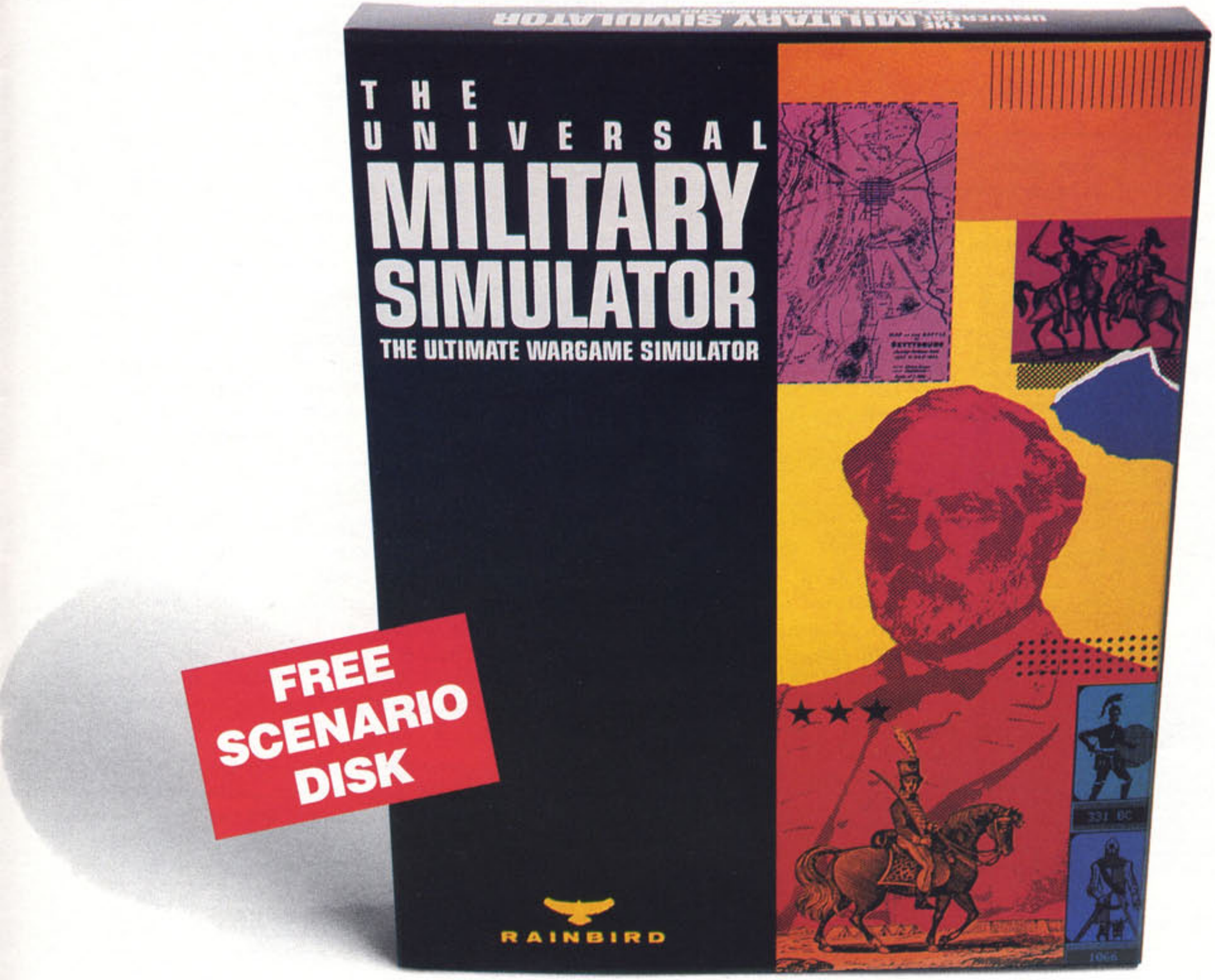
When *CGW* visited **Cinemaware**, we were told that the programmers had flexible hours. Even though Bob Jacob guided our tour through the company's facility, he was not certain which employees were going to be "in-house" at that particular time. Our first stop was an office where we were introduced to Mike Knox and Peter Oliphant, who were working on an IBM development system for graphics. The project is a method of writing *one* code for all graphics cards. Curiously enough, in keeping with **Cinemaware**'s entertainment industry roots, Peter Oliphant was a child television star. Those who watched the *Dick Van Dyke Show* would remember him as Ritchie's friend, Freddie.

Our next stop was an office where we visited with John Cutter and Larry Garner. John has the distinction of being **Cinemaware**'s first employee. His name is listed in the credits of nearly every **Cinemaware** release as producer. Larry will be familiar to **Cinemaware** fans as the mastermind behind the video compression schemes utilized by the company. Together, these two are working on *NFL TV Football* for the Amiga (which was described in our Consumer Electronics Show report in the July issue).

Wayne Brockman is the Apple guru who does the primary IIGS and Macintosh work for the company. Currently, Wayne is working on the company's Disney license for *Duck Tales*. One interesting technique in the preparation of this product is the use of *Hypercard* for storyboarding the story ideas. By storing digitized video-taped animation cells from **Disney**'s own camera-ready art, the game designers can quickly observe a mini-

(Continued on page 59)

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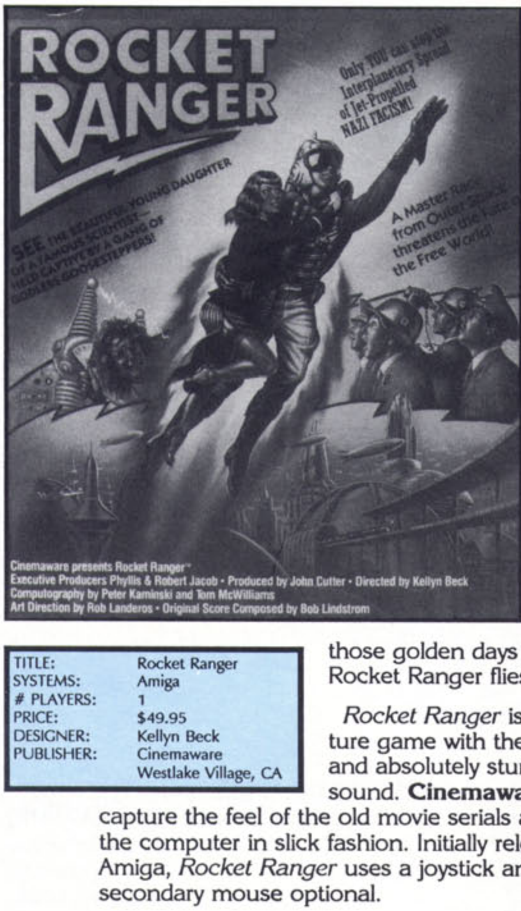
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Rocket Ranger Saves the World!

In the '50s and early '60s, a dime could buy a passport to a full Saturday afternoon of adventure, fantasy and terror (the local Saturday kiddie matinee no doubt struck terror in the hearts of theater managers and ushers everywhere!).



That tenth of a dollar would get you the main feature, previews, three cartoons and "The Saturday Afternoon Serial." These were the times of Zorro, Gene Autry and Commando Cody.

The people at **Cinemaware** must have spent many Saturday afternoons in the dark because they've chosen to recreate those memories with *Rocket Ranger*. So, as they used to say, "Return with us now to those golden days of yesteryear," as Rocket Ranger flies again!

TITLE:	Rocket Ranger
SYSTEMS:	Amiga
# PLAYERS:	1
PRICE:	$49.95
DESIGNER:	Kellyn Beck
PUBLISHER:	Cinemaware Westlake Village, CA

Rocket Ranger is an action/adventure game with the accent on action and absolutely stunning graphics and sound. **Cinemaware** has managed to capture the feel of the old movie serials and translate it to the computer in slick fashion. Initially released on the Amiga, *Rocket Ranger* uses a joystick and keyboard with a secondary mouse optional.

The game's premise is that the Nazis actually won World War II. So, freedom fighters from the future have beamed equipment back in time to help you prevent the Nazis from conquering the world. Armed with a rocket pack, radium pistol, wrist radio and decoder wheel, you must find five rocket parts hidden throughout the world, assemble them, load 500 units of lunarium (rocket fuel), and fly to the moon. There, you'll do battle with Nazi female stormtroopers and other assorted nasties.

To help you find the rocket parts, you have five secret agents that can infiltrate various countries, gather clues and organize underground resistance to slow down the German zeppelin fleet. Time is of the essence. You need to beat the clock, master most of the eight action sequences and hope for a good deal of luck before you'll be able to kiss the girl and hang up that rocket pack.

GOOSESTEPPERS KIDNAP PROFESSOR!

The game starts with you at Fort Dix. The Nazis have kidnapped Professor Barnstorff and his daughter, Jane. If the Germans can get the Professor to Germany, they'll stick him on a rocket, fly him to the moon, increase the efficiency of their lunarium processing operation, and conquer the world faster than you can say, "Heil, Hitler!"

The war room at Ft. Dix features a map of the world with the Nazi zeppelin fleet superimposed over different countries. From here, you run your spy network. As the fleet moves over a country, it bombards it into submission (turning the country a dark brown on the map). The fleet then proceeds to the next country on its random "hit list" and so on. While this is going on, you place icons of your agents in the countries you want infiltrated. Spies can adopt a high or low profile, running risks accordingly. When a spy icon flashes, it has a message to report. This information may pinpoint a rocket part, give clues, highlight Nazi industry to be eliminated (slowing down the German fleet's efficiency), or show the country as clean. Once the initial report is in, the spy may either move to another country or organize resistance in the current location.

If resistance is organized, the Nazi fleet will have to spend extra months trying to conquer that country. The time purchased by this effort just *might* mean success in stopping the German horde. Once the country goes over to your side, the map colors it a lighter shade of brown, enabling you to tell at a glance how you are doing in relation to the Nazis and where you must yet go. If a lunarium base or rocket part is uncovered, the appropriate icon appears in the country.

Also, a date in the upper left corner of the display seems to speed along at an unfair rate. Though spending lots of time in the war room seems like the perfect way to plot strategy, you could be arrested for cowardice for staying too long (twelve months). So, it's off to gather some rocket parts.

The game comes with a decoder wheel which tells how much fuel you must load into your rocket pack to get to your destination. Once loaded, you move to the first of the action screens, the take-off. You use the joystick to control your foot speed and take off when everything is in perfect alignment. This isn't terribly difficult, but it gets harder with a heavier load of fuel. Once into the air, the screen displays a map of the world with pins marking your progress across it (as in serials imitated by Indiana Jones).

HERO KO'S KRAUT GUARD!

Once you get to a rocket-part location, you have to fight a German guard in hand-to-hand combat. The joystick controls the kind of punch you throw and its location. The sound effects in this sequence are really great! A body punch really sounds different from a jawbreaker and after a few punches you really get into the fight.

If you choose to try and slow down the Nazi war machine with a spoiling raid, your opponents will be Me 109s. You get to use your radium pistol on these boys and they don't always fly in close formation. The joystick controls vertical

and horizontal movement, while the fire button sends a steady stream of green death at the enemy. When hit, the Messerschmitts literally go down in flames, a truly beautiful sight for sore eyes. Successful raids knock German efficiency down five to ten percent.

If you rescue the professor and his daughter, you face the Nazi zeppelin and its aerial torpedoes. Dodging torpedoes while taking out the gondola gunners requires extraordinary precision. After all, you *do* know what zeppelins are filled with . . . hydrogen. Be prepared to watch a replay of the Hindenberg a few times before you get the hang of this.

Your trips around the world will invariably burn up most of the lunarium you start the game with. This means your spies must (along with everything else) uncover some other sources of the stuff. Once fuel depots are discovered, you need to raid them. In South America, you'll have to crack an Aztec temple complete with machine gun ports and in the desert, you must get by anti-aircraft batteries.

An easier way to gather fuel is to have your agent organize resistance in the country that has the lunarium. They will, in turn, ship it to you on a monthly basis. This is the safe way to go, but the shipments are slow and small.

Once the rocket is assembled, it's off to the moon where beautiful and voluptuous female stormtroopers with guns await you. There are lots of them and they move fast. Once past them, it's on to the final showdown and a world free from Nazi threats.

ALLIES UNVEIL VICTORIOUS STRATEGY!

Warning: The following dossier is highly classified and contains specific hints about possible victorious strategies. Gamers should avoid this section until a need to know arises.

First, pull your agent out of Germany. It is useless trying to organize resistance there and he is needed elsewhere. Putting one agent in South America, two or three in Africa/Middle East, and one in Europe seems most efficient.

Wait for your agents to report. Then, have them organize resistance in their respective countries. That is usually the best use of your agents: report and organize. The zeppelin fleet must be slowed. Since you'll probably only have time and fuel for three trips out of Fort Dix, use them wisely.

After the first wave of reports comes in and resistance is being organized, load your tanks with all the fuel at Fort Dix and go back to the war room. Any wasted effort or poor use of time in this game will beat you, so efficiency counts. Once back in the war room, send your agents to new countries for infiltration and take off. Where you go depends on what your agents find.

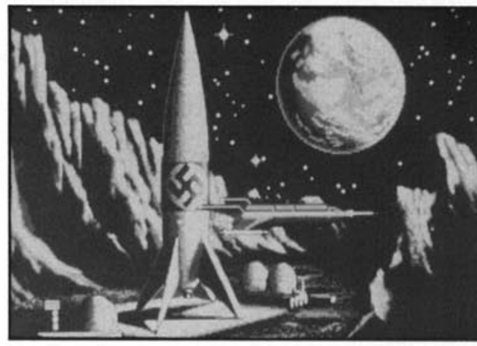
In spite of the game's manipulation, don't try and rescue the professor and his daughter! The screens are humorous and the zeppelin fight is fun, but you use too much time. By the time you return to the war room, the Nazis have usually conquered four to six countries and you will probably run out of time.

When fighting the Messerschmitts, stay high in the air. If you fly low you'll be hit by flack and lose a couple of months, time you don't have to spare.

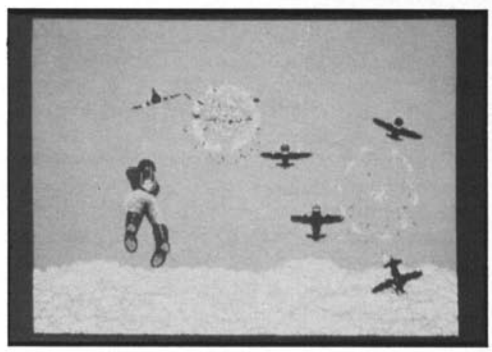
You'll probably develop your own style of fisticuffs when it comes to beating the Nazi guards, but pretty good success comes by throwing repeated uppercuts, mixed in with an occasional left jab or body punch. When the guard covers up, (Rope-a-dope), wait till he drops his guard and then let him have it.



COMPUTER DOUBLES AS TIME MACHINE!



What is it like to play this game? It really is like taking a trip back to that darkened theater of your memories. The visual screens are like digitized scenes right out of those old serials we used to watch. When you signal for help on your wrist radio, you get the RKO tower, broadcasting signals over the airwaves, just as it did in the start of every RKO movie of the period. **Cinemaware** is the perfect company to have done this product. Playing *Rocket Ranger* is like living the experience of the old serials.



This is intensified by the fact that Bob Lindstrom's musical score matches the action in quality and feel throughout the game. The gang at **Cinemaware** really get an A+ in these departments.

Now, for the down side. This game is tough! Let me repeat that, tough! That's not necessarily bad, but there is no save-game feature on *Rocket Ranger* and it's very easy to die in this game. The game can be played in about an hour, but if you die in the latter stages, it's start over from the beginning time. This can get to be frustrating about the thirtieth time you play it. We talked with the publisher about the lack of a save-game feature and were told that their philosophy is that a game that takes less than an hour to finish shouldn't have a save-game ability. It makes it too easy to win. There's some truth to that, but save-game features are standard in today's market. This feature would help to avoid the frustration that builds in this game as one has to repeatedly replay the early sequences in their entirety. If a person *did* win easily by utilizing the save-game feature, he could always come back to the game and attempt to win it without using the save-game option.

Beyond the arcade sequences and the difficulty mastering all of them, there are several random elements that can sometimes appear to make victory even more unattainable. For example, high profile agents in an occupied country

(Continued on page 54)

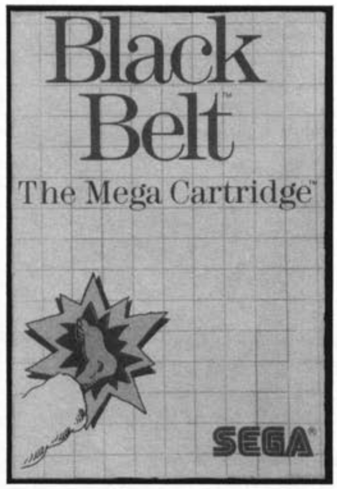
Video Gaming World

Video Gaming World's Newswire

Compiled by Joyce Worley

The chip shortage continues to hold the videogame industry in a vicelike grip. In some cases, new products promised for Autumn have been postponed until next year. A chip rationing system set up by **Nintendo** for third-party software manufacturers will permit each company to release up to five videogame titles during the next year. For most companies, this means one or two before Christmas, with the balance of their designs postponed until Spring 1989, or even later. There will still be plenty of games available for the holiday buying season, this year, but some popular titles are in short supply. So, when retailers sell out, it may take time for them to obtain new stock . . . **Konami** has formed a fully-owned subsidiary, **Ultra Games**. Their first release for NES is *Metal Gear*, to be followed by *Skate or Die!* from the **Electronic Arts**' computer game. Next spring's releases are *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, based on the comic book of the same name, and the most ambitious graphic translation from a computer game to date, **Cinemaware**'s *Defender of the Crown*, both for the **Nintendo** system . . . **Activision** is expected to release *Ghostbusters* on the NES in October. In the game, players start with $10,000 and an Ectomobile. Then, they purchase equipment to overcome slimers, roamers, and, of course, a giant Marshmallow Man. Among the tools available for ghosthunters with the bucks





are Super Traps, Anti-Ghost Suit, Ghost Vacuum, Ghost Traps, Sound Generator, Alarm, Hyper Beams, and Capture Beams . . . According to **Toys-R-Us** buyer, Hal Seidel, **Tradewest**'s *Double Dragon* sold out in its first two weeks on sale. This martial arts title was a runaway coin-snatcher in Japan and reached U.S. play-for-pay parlors in April of 1987. It features twin brothers, martial-arts champs, fighting together to rescue a kidnapped girlfriend (isn't there always a helpless frail in these contests?), and combat with knives, whips, bats, rocks, oil drums, and explosives. The characters traverse varied city and country terrain until they reach the surprising final confrontation against the gang boss . . . **Absolute Entertainment** has a new skateboard game for the **7800**, *Super Skateboardin'* is a redevelopment of their current **Atari 2600** title, *Skate Boardin'*. The new game is said to take advantage of the enhanced graphics capability of the **Atari 7800**, with added complexities. A second offering for the **Atari 7800** is *F-18 Hornet*, designed by John Van Ryzin. This fighter-jet contest with 3-D flight graphics casts the gamer as pilot from take off through training, assaults, bombing missions, and supply drops to the ultimate landing on an aircraft carrier . . . The famous **Wico** Red Ball Joystick (compatible with **Sega** and **Atari** videogames, plus **Commodore** computers) was voted gamers' favorite by a margin of 7-to-1 in a recent survey. At $20-25, it's still a good buy. An updated version, the **Command Control Super Three-Way Joystick** lets the gamer toggle between 8-way and 4-way control, and switch between three handle styles, for $25.

The Furious Fists of Sega!

A Trio of Martial Arts Games

by Bill Kunkel, Joyce Worley, and Arnie Katz

Somewhere along the line of the development of martial arts arcade games, the emphasis passed almost entirely from the "arts" to the "martial."

Data East started the kicks and chops flying several years ago with its classic coin-op, *Karate Champ*. The idea was to duplicate the wide variety of hand and foot blows possible within the karate format. The player-character fought one opponent at a time against a non-scrolling background consisting of the referee and a small crowd of onlookers.

The sophisticated control system allowed the user access to an amazing range of realistic maneuvers, from spinning reverse kicks to somersaults, chops, and thrusts. Watching a skilled *Karate Champ* player in full cry was an amazing experience. It was as though one were observing the on-screen characters engaged in a bare-hands battle royale as thrilling as a Bruce Lee movie.

Unfortunately, though *Karate Champ* inspired several clones, it was **Data East**'s follow-up, *Kung Fu*, that became the prototype for the vast majority of subsequent martial arts games. *Kung Fu* was different from *Karate Champ* in two crucial ways: it greatly simplified the combat system and it introduced multiple opponents.

All three martial arts games from **Sega** stress these two factors and none are interested in seriously simulating *any* form of Oriental combat. *Black Belt* and *Kung Fu Kid* are straight ahead imitators of *Kung Fu*, while *The Ninja*, strictly speaking, is not a martial arts game at all, but an action-adventure that uses *shuriken* (ninja stars) instead of bullets, fireballs, or thunderbolts.

Black Belt is the most traditional martial arts game of the three. The player-character fights an increasingly deadly gamut of opponents in a horizontally scrolling run-the-gauntlet contest. Combatants are realistically

depicted from a side-view. Game level, power level, score, and time elapsed are displayed at the top of the screen.

There is even a plot, even if it is the time-honored one where your girlfriend has been kidnapped and you must beat up a bunch of weird fighters to get her back. This epic theme obviously struck the instruction booklet writers as so literary that they decided to break the game into "chapters" instead of "levels."

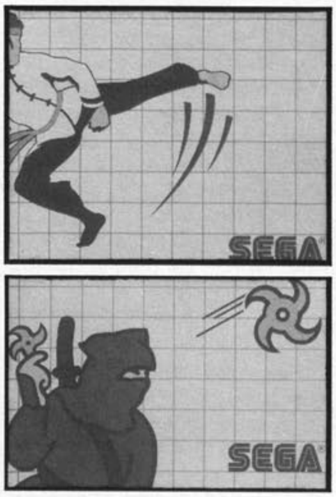
There are six levels/chapters with opponent classes divided into Small and Large Enemies. The Small Enemies are: "Chinese Kung Fu Men," "Wrestlers," "Jujitsu Men," "Eagles," and, unbelievably, "Black Women." The Big Enemies have names like "Ryu," "Gonta," and "Wang." In their defense, however, the designers probably did not intend to be offensive. It simply seems that this booklet was as badly translated from Japanese as most **Sega** documentation. Someday, perhaps, **Sega** will pay someone who speaks English as a primary language to go over its instructions.

As with most *Kung Fu*-style games, there are only two types of offensive and two kinds of defensive moves available to the player-character: he can punch or kick on offense and squat or jump on defense. The rest of the game consists of the endless repetition of these moves against a farrago of strange-looking opponents.

Black Belt, at least, attempts to distinguish among the various types of Oriental combat. Some enemy fighters are designated "kung fu" practitioners, while others employ "jujitsu" techniques. This is a welcome change in a genre that generally regards "karate" and "kung fu" as synonyms.

Kung Fu Kid has the same basic "orient"-ation as *Black Belt*, but the simple action is almost overwhelmed by the incredibly contrived play-mechanics. The player takes the role of Wang, who is seeking revenge against Matanda, billed as "the unnatural evil one" in the unintentionally hilarious instructions. Whether it is Matanda or his evil that is unnatural is never really explained, however.

Kung Fu Kid also uses a horizontally-scrolling side perspective, but here the characters are tiny and cartoon-like, rather than realistic. This is just as well, since the



Sega's Kung Fu Kid (top) and The Ninja (bottom)

plotline and game devices are so bizarre any attempt at realism would be predestined to failure.

One of this game's "innovations" is the use of a "talisman" as an all-purpose offensive weapon. There are two types: regular and super, and these can be used to defeat certain enemies. If that doesn't make sense, let's let the instructions explain it: *Your talisman can be found hanging in the air when you're attacking enemies . . . You are allowed to throw your talisman 99 times during the game . . . Now - the talisman will bring down different numbers of enemies.* If this doesn't make much sense, it isn't any more logical within the game itself. The player's talisman can become a Super Talisman during round 2, because ". . . a lobster will appear on screen. When you strike it down, your talisman will acquire superpower and efficiency to help you destroy the enemies." A *lobster*?!?

The Ninja, as mentioned above, is a different type of game entirely. The player-character does not engage in hand-to-hand combat, but wards off a wide range of attackers with sharp-edged ninja stars (called "darts" in the instructions). As the enemies—wielding swords, *shuriken*, sickles, fire breath,



TITLE:	Metal Gear
SYSTEM:	Nintendo
# PLAYERS:	1
PRICE:	$39.95
PUBLISHER:	Ultra Games

spears, and bare hands—are dispatched, they disappear. Occasionally, they yield up a scroll in their place. These scrolls enhance the player-character's power in various ways.

The enemies are the usual rogues' gallery of ever-deadlier assassins, but *The Ninja* offers a new wrinkle: certain ninjas have the uncanny ability to imitate rocks! Some rocks are just stones, but others transform themselves into deadly ninja at the player-character's approach.

The Ninja does use an interesting visual perspective, however. It utilizes a scrolling overhead and slightly rear view. This point of view works nicely in terms of following the action and the realistic graphics have only one serious weakness: ugly dot-patterns are overlaid onto the various locations and give much of the game a tacky look.

The action moves, literally, in several directions as the player attempts to reach and penetrate Ohkami Castle in search of the villainous Gyokuro. Along the way, there is a grassy field, a cliff area, prairie, a shrine, river bank (with a great action river ride on rolling logs), town streets, a small town, Samurai area, a great stone wall, terrace, and the massive castle itself (which, in turn, is subdivided into three sectors).

The Ninja is easily the most entertaining of **Sega**'s three martial arts titles. It is disturbing, however, that the videogame systems as a whole have so ignored *real* karate, kung fu, and judo simulations. Here's hoping **Sega** or **Nintendo** will address this weakness by producing (or licensing in **Nintendo**'s case), **Data East**'s excellent *Karate Champ*.

Until then, we must be satisfied with punches, kicks, and giant lobsters. *Lobsters*?!?

Ultra Games promises to be a major player in the **Nintendo** market for the next year or so. The roster of coming releases (see Newswire) seems imposing. Their first release, *Metal Gear*, is something less than a total success, despite its strong concept.

In *Metal Gear*, the player is cast as a Rambo-style one-man commando, hot on the heels of a heel named Colonel Vermon Ca Taffy (presumably a play on "Khadaffi") and his Elite Scum Squad. Ca Taffy has developed a new super weapon, known only as "Metal Gear," which the player must locate and neutralize.

Metal Gear is driven, as its name implies, by equipment. The player-character, code-named Solid Snake, starts out with nothing but a Transceiver to send and receive messages with Commander South (presumably a play on former . . . well, you

know) at Fox Hound's HQ. Why he wasn't supplied with even a handgun is something of a mystery, but the Transceiver does come in handy, since Commander South provides helpful information on the whereabouts of weapons and enemies, if the player uses the correct frequency. This information is transmitted at the start of the game.

Along the way, all manner of weapons and equipment can be collected by Solid Snake. These are found in enemy trucks and storehouses (or simply confiscated from an enemy by force). Weapons include practically everything from a Beretta M92F (and silencer) to radio-controlled missiles. Equipment runs from bomb blast suits and body armor to infrared goggles and universal antidote.

The game scrolls in all directions, but Solid Snake can only move from one screen to another by means of one of the roads. In addition to the angled, overhead display, the playscreen includes readouts on Snake's vital signs, rank (finding and rescuing prisoners nets automatic promotions), Transceiver callsignal, weapon in use, ammunition remaining, and equipment in use.

The graphics are acceptable, but there are flaws. For example, Snake cannot move behind objects like jeeps and it is often necessary for him to fumble around the outside of trucks looking for the entrance point. This problem is worsened by the player's poor control over Snake. Controller pad movement is extremely jerky, making the narrow twists and turns Snake must travel even tougher to navigate.

It is also very frustrating to start out in a game like this without a weapon of any kind. Fortunately, Snake throws a pretty good punch and the Scum Squad members he encounters early in the game are such cretins that they announce, in full voice, "I'M GETTING SLEEPY!" while they stand guard. Even so, a game should become more difficult as the player progresses. It should certainly not begin at the most challenging point in the learning curve. Although *Metal Gear* does become progressively more difficult, the player can compensate by acquiring more weapons and equipment. Snake is never more vulnerable than when he is without weapons or protective equipment during the game's opening moments.

Snake wields his plundered weapons, when he eventually finds some, through a fairly simple system. The player just hits the Select button to use one of Snake's high-tech gizmos. This freezes all action on-screen (in fact, all characters temporarily disappear) and invokes a menu from which the player chooses weapons, equipment, or transceiver. The first two options bring up a sub-menu with icons representing all items in that inventory and the player chooses among them. Calling up the transceiver produces a close-up graphic of that worthy communications device, along with a printout of any messages.

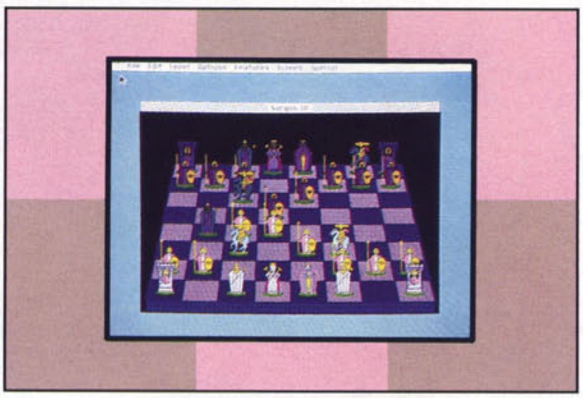
Games can be saved using the laborious **Nintendo Password System**. The user enters a password (through a point-and-click process using an on-screen alpha-numeric keyboard) to save a game in progress. Up to four games can be recorded in this way.

Metal Gear shows much promise for future **Ultra Games** entries. It attempts to move beyond the standard run/jump/shoot format favored by the vast majority of NES software publishers. It also exploits the desire of the player to acquire newer, deadlier technology through the course of a game. These strengths combine to make *Metal Gear* a potential super-hit that, unfortunately, is sabotaged by its own weaknesses. *—Bill Kunkel*

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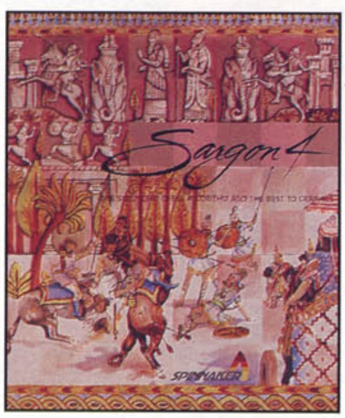
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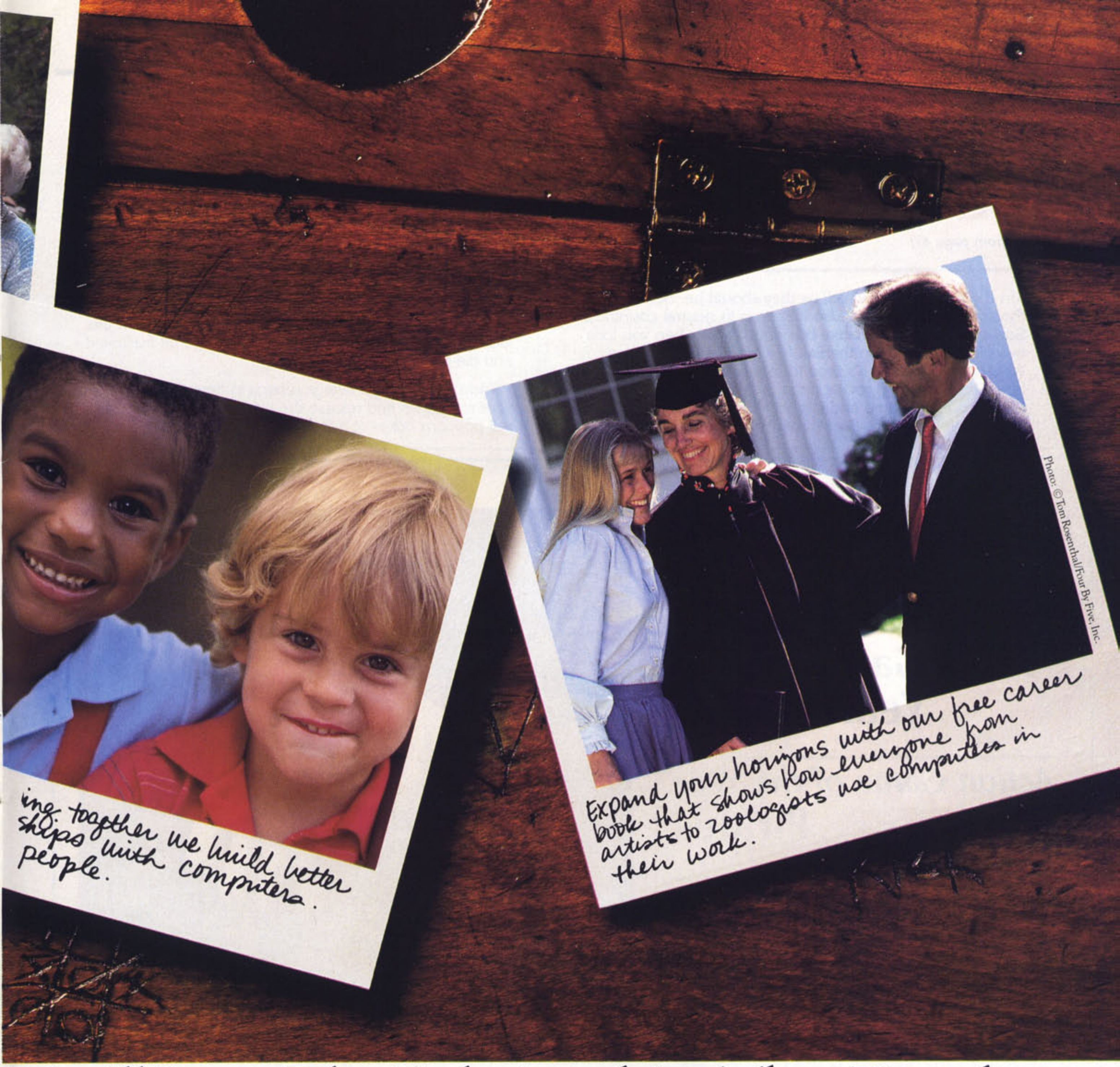
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Throughout October, PTA's, universities, scout troops, museums, computer and software stores, schools, and clubs everywhere will be handing out materials and putting on special events. Maybe that's why we're the non-profit program that's endorsed by so many national organizations,* State Departments of Education and even the U.S. Senate. Learn in your group, enter a contest, pick up a free book…just clip the coupon and we'll send you everything you need to get started fast. But hurry. Because the sooner you do, the sooner you'll develop relationships of your own.

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I am an ☐ educator ☐ parent ☐ student

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(type of computer ______________________)

I have children in ☐ K-6 ☐ 7-12 ☐ university ☐ none

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Rocket Ranger

(Continued from page 47)

run the risk of being killed, as they should be. Sometimes, though, low risk agents also die, even in neutral countries. Some of this is reasonable, but what about when you lose two or three agents in the first few months of the game. When that happens, it's time to reboot and start over. The lunarium bases and rocket parts are randomly placed in countries every game and it is imperative that the lunarium bases be found early. Sometimes, your agents won't find them until it's too late. That zeppelin fleet just doesn't quit. When these things happen, it's time to reboot. Believe me, in game 31 or 32, you don't want to see these things happen. If even a one-time save-game feature had been included, it could eliminate the frustration that the game fosters. For maximum challenge, one could always play without using it and have the best of both worlds.

Can this game be recommended? Yes! It blends action and strategy nicely and supports an entertaining game with wonderful graphics and sound. However, because of the lack of a save-game feature, be prepared to be frustrated and die often.

Rocket Ranger will take you back in time to the serials of your memories and release the kid in us all to once more sail popcorn boxes at a flickering screen.

Announcing
Computer Gaming World's 1988 Game of the Year Awards

Action Game of the Year
Pirates

Strategy Game of the Year
Panzer Strike

Adventure Game of the Year
Wasteland

Special Artistic Achievement Award
Dungeon Master

Game of the Year
Empire



COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

Computer Gaming World presented our 1988 Game of the Year Awards over Labor Day Weekend at the Gateway Convention in Los Angeles. Next issue will feature a full report with the winners and photos.

Circle Reader Service #52 »

HARPOON

Somewhere in the desolate and freezing wastes of the North Atlantic, between Iceland and the Kola Peninsula, a Soviet battle fleet is lurking, ready to pounce on its prey.

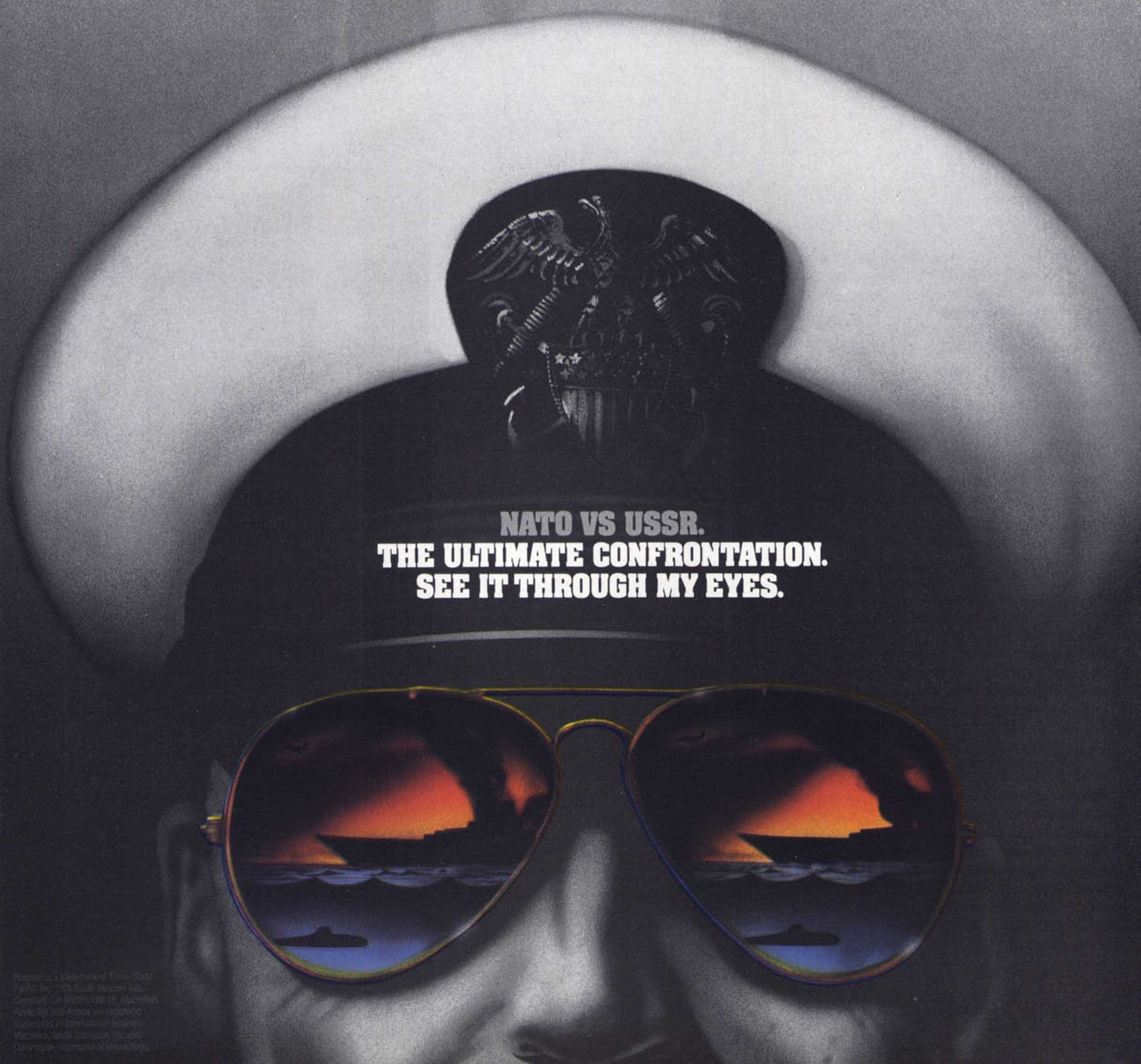
As NATO Task Force Commander you must deploy your fleet of submarines, ships, and aircraft to locate, engage and defeat the Kremlin's finest.

Produced by Larry Bond, noted co-author of "Red Storm Rising" and Naval Analyst, Harpoon portrays the superpower's final confrontation. Now it's up to you.

With graphics that make everything else look like finger painting, and an arsenal of weaponry that comes up to your armpits, Harpoon's non-stop action, relentless intensity and chilling responsibility will leave you gasping. It's more than a mere game—it's a current event!

Available now for PC/compatibles. Coming for Macintosh, Apple IIGS and Amiga. Contact your software retailer or Three-Sixty, 408/879-9144.

THREE-SIXTY



the enemy. Atari ST ($44.95) and IBM ($39.95). Circle Reader Service Card #6.

PLATOON: Just as the film hits the video-tape stores and pay television channels, the computer game also comes to your home screen. This action game, originally designed by European software publisher **Ocean**, follows the plotline of the film. There are six basic sections or scenarios, including the betrayal. The measurement of "morale" is an innovative feature for an arcade game. Atari ST ($44.95), C-64/128 ($29.95), and IBM ($39.95). Circle Reader Service Card #7.

VICTORY ROAD: This is a sequel to *Ikari Warriors*. The weapons are similar and the graphics are, too. The villains have been changed to offer the same types of gameplay in a different environment. IBM ($39.95). Circle Reader Service Card #8.

DigiTek, Inc.
10415 N. Florida Ave.
Suite 410
Tampa, FL 33612

JOE BLADE: This squat-looking G.I. Joe must escape Crax Bloodfinger's stronghold (127 screens) and rescue the six hostages imprisoned therein. Think of it as a 16-bit *Castle Wolfenstein*. Amiga ($34.95). Circle Reader Service Card #9.

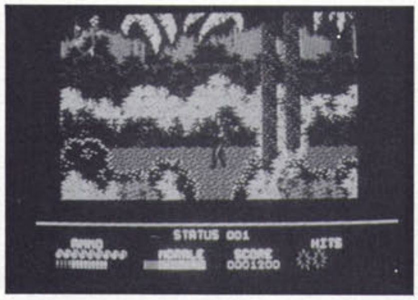
Epyx
600 Galveston Dr.
Redwood City, CA 94063

FINAL ASSAULT: This action game features the strategy of mountain climbing, even down to the equipment to choose for weather conditions and type of slope. The game offers impressive graphics and a viewpoint through the climber's sunglasses. Different routes, marked by familiar ski slope icons, indicate the difficulty levels. Next time someone tells you to "Go climb a rock!," boot this game. Amiga, Atari ST ($49.95), C-64/128 and IBM ($39.95). Circle Reader Service Card #10.

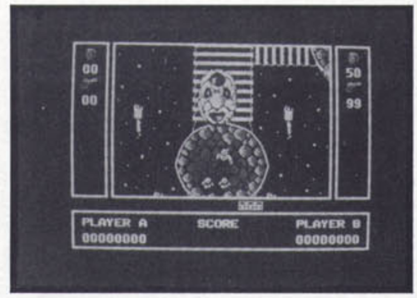
SPORTING NEWS BASEBALL: Players can draft teams from authentic player statistics (both "Hall of Fame" and modern rosters to choose from), make managerial decisions, and then, play the game in action mode in this hybrid action/strategy game. The emphasis is on action, but the action is influenced by six separate batting/fielding ratings. C-64/128 ($39.95). Circle Reader Service Card #11.

THE GAMES: SUMMER EDITION: Eight Olympic events for up to eight contestants are featured in this action game. This is not a rehash of *Summer Games*, but features: thirteen move sequences and slow motion instant replay in the "Uneven Parallel Bars," a choice of 35 different dives in the "Springboard Diving" competition; and "Velodrome Sprint Cycling" with ability to "draft" in the opponent's tail wind, among others. The outstanding fractal graphic treatment of the stadium and backgrounds makes the player feel like he's really there. C-64/128 ($39.95) and IBM ($44.95). Circle Reader Service Card #12.

TOWER TOPPLER: Players must avoid mutant molecules, boulders, robots, and cannonballs in scaling the sides of eight rotating towers in this European import. Armed only with a snowball gun, players try to reach the tops of the towers in order to set off their self-destruct mechanism and save the ocean from their noxious pollution.



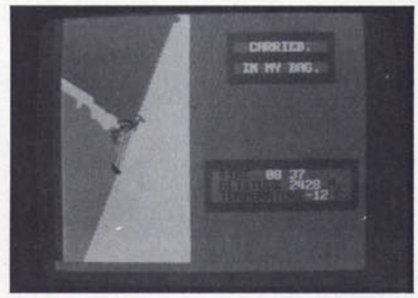
Platoon



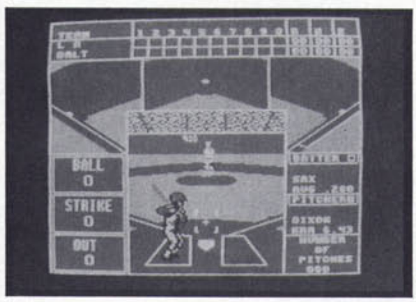
Victory Road



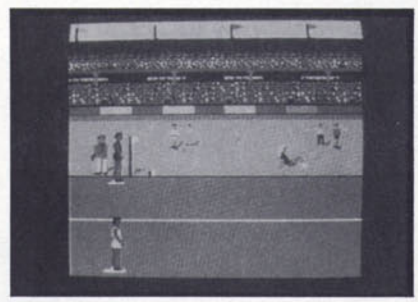
Joe Blade



Final Assault



Sporting News Baseball



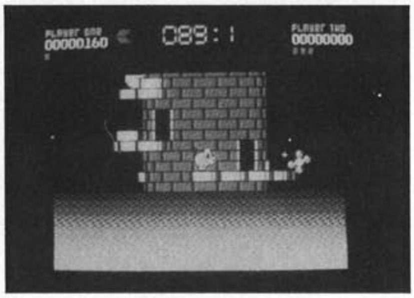
The Games: Summer Edition

C-64/128 ($39.95). Circle Reader Service Card #13.

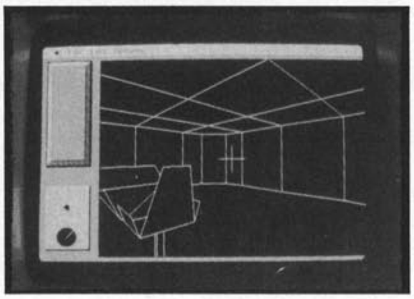
Mindscape, Inc.
3444 Dundee Road
Northbrook, IL 60062

CLUBHOUSE SPORTS: Whether it's the shooting gallery on the boardwalk, the billiard table in the back room, the pinball machine at the bowling alley, the bumper pool table at the pizza joint, the foosball table at the corner bar, or the skeeball alley on the midway, this game emulates the kind of action players are expecting to find there. The game is from the same folks that brought *Indoor Sports* to the computer. C-64/128 ($29.95). Circle Reader Service Card #14.

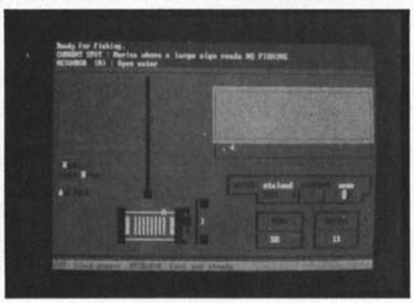
THE COLONY: Designed by a specialist in robotics, this graphic adventure enables players to explore a unique three-dimensional environment in the process of solving a series of mysterious



Tower Toppler



The Colony

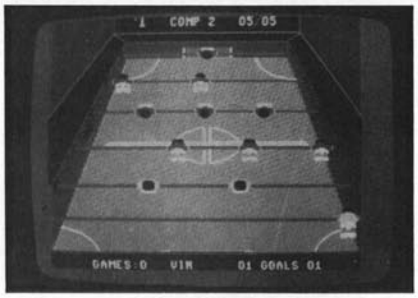


Bass Champ

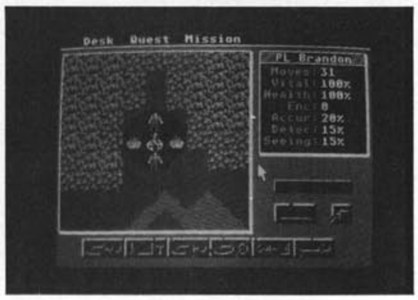
disappearances. The game takes place on a frontier outpost in space and the player is the detective/marshal who must solve the mystery. Suspension of disbelief comes rapidly when players begin to manipulate the environment in a realistic fashion. Macintosh ($49.95). Circle Reader Service Card #15.

Omnitrend Software
P.O. Box 733
West Simsbury, CT 06092

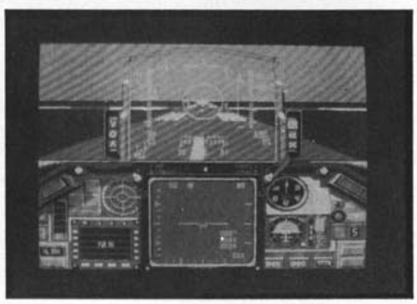
PALADIN: Imagine *Breach* in a fantasy world with better sound effects and just as much constructability. In fact, squad leaders from the science fiction game may be imported into the fantasy game. Rather than a linear storyline, this game is a series of individual quests, such as: rescuing prisoners, obtaining scrolls, exiting the combat zone, and/or killing a certain percentage of opponents before the time limit is up. Amiga and Atari ST ($39.95), but Quest Disk is extra ($24.95). Circle Reader Service Card #16.



Clubhouse Sports



Paladin



Falcon A.T.

Shadowfax Software
2005 W. Culver Ave.,
Ste. 19
Orange, CA 92668

RICH TAUBER'S BASS CHAMP: A combination tutorial and tournament simulation, this product allows players to participate in timed fishing tournaments and compete against computerized opponents. It keeps track of earnings and positions, as well as giving advice. The advice comes from champion fisherman, Rich Tauber. The graphics are plain, but the tournaments are addictive. IBM ($40.00). Circle Reader Service Card #17.

Simulations Canada
P.O. Box 452
Bridgewater, Nova Scotia
CANADA B4V 2X6

IN HARM'S WAY: This grand tactical naval game picks up in the Pacific theatre where *Long Lance* left off. This product emphasizes the second and third years of the war in the Pacific. The doctrinal approach to naval engagements (where the commander establishes guidelines for a given situation before the scenario begins) works particularly well in this series and the scenario editor is to be appreciated, as well. The fact that some of these actions take place outside the Solomons further insures that players can build their own scenarios. Apple II, Atari ST, C-64/128, and IBM ($60.00). Circle Reader Service Card #18.

ROMMEL AT EL ALAMEIN: Three historical battles (Ruweisat Ridge, Alam Halfa, and El Alamein) plus carefully considered "What if?" situations for each of these battles comprise the basis of this product. The situation picks up almost to the day after the events depicted in *Rommel At Gazala*, the designers' earlier command-oriented study of the North African campaign in 1942. The playing aids have changed, but the system is the same. Apple II, Atari ST, IBM ($60.00). Circle Reader Service Card #19.

Spectrum Holobyte
2061 Challenger Dr.
Alameda, CA 94501

FALCON A.T.: Although the subject matter is the same as the IBM version of *Falcon*, the F-16 simulator reviewed in the February issue of *CGW*, the presentation is different. The new version of the product is designed to make use of both the EGA graphics capabilities and the faster 286 and 386 processors. The designers have also created new missions, new camera viewpoints, and additional ground targets. IBM with EGA (or VGA with EGA emulation) and 286/386 processor ($59.95). Circle Reader Service Card #20.

Spinnaker Software
One Kendall Square
Cambridge, MA 02139

SARGON 4: Imagine *Sargon III* with sixteen levels of difficulty, an option to create customized playing pieces, 107 classic chess games to study, more than 100 chess problems to solve, and an improved endgame. That's what the latest

version of this popular chess program has to offer. Macintosh ($49.95). Circle Reader Service Card #21.

Strategic Simulations, Inc. 1046 N. Rengstorff Ave. Mt. View, CA 94043

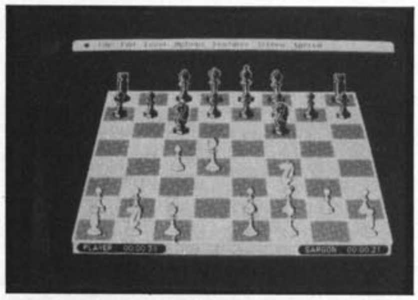
DEMON'S WINTER: The last words of the fathers of Ildryn were, "If I die this day, avenge me . . . avenge me . . . avenge me . . ." In this adventure game which sports similar mechanics to *Shard of Spring*, the player gets the chance to avenge his/her father's death at the hands of wicked kobolds. As usual, however, there are greater dangers. Apple II ($29.95). Circle Reader Service Card #22.

DUNGEON MASTERS ASSISTANT: VOLUME 1: ENCOUNTERS: This utility, designed to be used with TSR's *Advanced Dungeons and Dragons* role-playing game, enables dungeon masters to perform less book work and dice rolling in order to set-up random encounters. If users do not like the existing data, it is possible to modify the database and incorporate their own monsters and encounters to the more than 1,000 possibilities. Apple II ($29.95). Circle Reader Service Card #23.

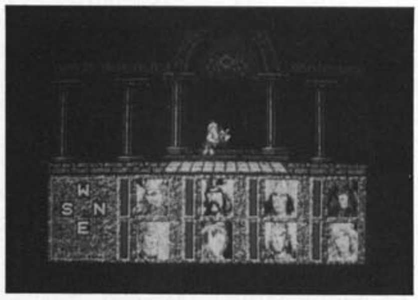
HEROES OF THE LANCE: A quest for the precious Disks of Mishakal is the main order of business in this beautifully ornamented action game. The party of adventurers comes from the *Dragonlance* series and the designers have even incorporated some of the character's personalities for players to contend with. The game is fast-moving and easy to use. CGW Consumer Advisory: The current version has a bug where the game hangs up when the adventurers try to cross a chasm. The chasm does not have to be crossed to win the game, but future versions will correct the problem. Contact SSI for details. Atari ST ($39.95). Circle Reader Service Card #24.

Timeline, Ltd. P.O. Box 60 Ypsilanti, MI 48197

BATTLE STATIONS!: The familiar childhood game of *Battleship* is back in this computer version of the traditional game. The graphics aren't fancy, but the computer opponent is supposed to be tough. Macintosh (no price). Circle Reader Service Card #25.



Sargon 4



Heroes of the Lance

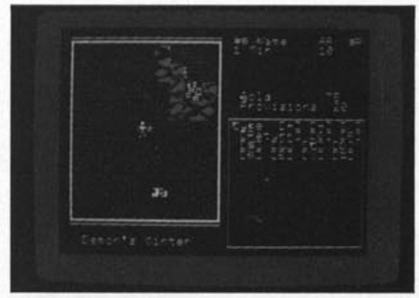


Fire & Forget

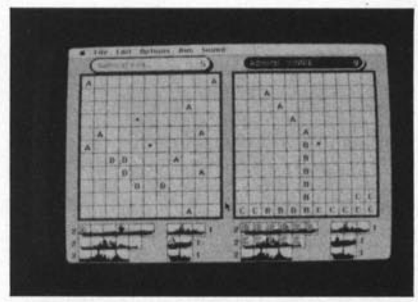
Be Sure To Fill Out Your R.I.D. Card

Titus Software Corporation 20432 Corisco St. Chatsworth, CA 91311

FIRE & FORGET: Players operate their own "Thunder Master" war machines in this two player shoot-'em-up. One player handles the offensive action and the other handles the defensive action as this action game features a nearly invincible tank in scenarios ranging from guerrilla warfare to global conflict. Amiga, Atari ST, IBM ($39.95). Circle Reader Service Card #26.



Demon's Winter



Battle Stations

Conversions Received

For the Amiga:
Bubble Ghost (Accolade)
Computer Scrabble (Leisure Genius)
Superstar Ice Hockey (Mindscape)

For the Apple II:
Scruples (Leisure Genius)
Star Rank Boxing II (Gamestar) requires 128K
Tetris (Spectrum Holobyte) requires 128K

For the Apple IIGS:
King's Quest II (Sierra)
Reach for the Stars 3rd Ed. (SSG)
Space Quest II (Sierra)

For the Atari ST:
Global Commander (Datasoft)
Jet (SubLogic)
Twilight's Ransom (Paragon)

For the C-64/128:
Decisive Battles of the Civil War II (SSG)
Scruples (Leisure Genius)

For the IBM:
Alien Fires: 2199 AD (Paragon)
Bubble Ghost (Accolade)
Fantavision (Broderbund)
Ikari Warriors (Data East)
Kamov (Data East)
Super Huey II (Cosmi)

For the Macintosh:
Police Quest (Sierra)
Solitaire Royale For Mac II (Spectrum Holobyte)
Space Quest II (Sierra)

Fantastic Voyages

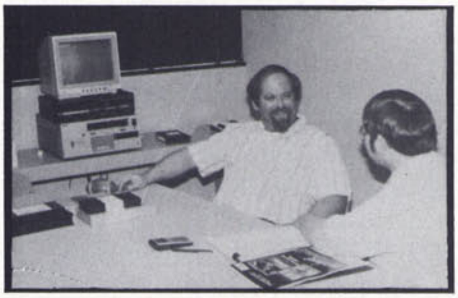
(Continued from page 44)

movie of game sequences and determine if a given sequence is going to work well or not.

David Todd designed an IBM navigational program for **NASA**. He is working on *Lords of the Rising Sun* for **Cinemaware**. This game with its dynamic graphics laid upon a bird's-eye, three-dimensional strategic view (with burning buildings, troops moving, and weather changes visually displayed on the map) should be interesting to both strategy gamers and arcade gamers. Unlike their earlier games, the arcade sequences can be toggled off. According to John Cutter, "We were trying to do an **SSI**-type game with **Cinemaware** sound and graphics."

We were also introduced to David Rierdon, designer of the coin-op game, *Freedom Fighter*. Similar to *Dragonslayer*, this coin-op game utilized actual animated film footage for the game sequences. Rierdon is **Cinemaware**'s one-man task force for CD-I and DV-I (Digital Video-Interactive). Rierdon is, for those interested in entertainment industry cross-fertilization, a former motion picture performer and composer of the popular hit, *Green-Eyed Lady*. He is helping the computer company in understanding the importance of player character point of view in utilizing either digitized or taped images. His thesis is essentially to use a third person perspective to set-up various events and a first person perspective whenever the character engages in combat.

We were also intrigued to note that the company is divided into two sections. The largest section is a non-smoking working environment. The smallest section functions under a separate air-conditioning system. This is the smoking section and it houses the artists. Considering the company's parallels with the motion picture industry, this seems only fitting. After all, how many feature films have you been to in recent months where you didn't read: "Smoking Permitted in Outer Lobby Only!"









(Top to bottom): Bob Jacob describes his latest, "greatest" product; John Cutter (r) & Larry Garner take a break from the grueling task of designing cheerleader uniforms for "TV Sports Football."; Wayne Brockman takes a break from the grueling task of storyboarding "Duck Tales."; The staff of Cinemaware takes a break from the grueling task of giving our reporters a tour. (And now the staff of CGW take a break from the grueling task of writing captions.).

Previews of Coming Attractions

In *Fantastic Voyages II*, *CGW* will visit **Mediagenic, Strategic Simulations, Inc.,** and **Origin Systems**. Future sequels will include **Broderbund, Epyx, Microprose, Accolade,** and **Lucasfilm Games**. Don't miss it!

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(Continued from page 6

ferent utility. The bottom line is that they can be backed up, right?

"The save game feature is not much use in saving your real position and party." Press "Q" anywhere in the game (even on the 16th level of the dungeon) and when you come back to it, it will be *exactly* as you left it. What more can you ask for?

"The I,J,K,M keys are used, no support for arrow keys or joystick." Why use the arrow keys when J & K serve that function? And for reasons you would have to be a programmer to understand, the joystick would make the game *very* slow.

"People with important clues are often hidden in out of the way places." What would you suggest, that I line them up at the entrance to the town?

"Experience seems to come only from killing monsters." This is not true, *anyone* who takes part in the battle (even insofar as curing someone else) will get a share.

"The game doesn't display experience." A flag appears to indicate that a player is ready to go up a level. I consider this to be superior to having to go back to town just to check, don't you?

"The full spell name must be typed in, no shortened version." Just press "?" and it will give you a list of all the available spells and you can then cursor down to the one you want and hit return.

"The descent into hell is easier than some of the other dungeons." Like you said, some of the others are there just for the experience and aren't necessary to the completion of the game. They are made to challenge upper level players.

"There is nothing new or noteworthy about the game." Though others have since copied it, *Deathlord* was the first game of its type to allow a party to save position anywhere and instantly. Play and execution is swift and efficient, no more tedious drawn out battles or waiting for excessive disk access. It is the first game to provide user-defined macro keys. The overhead dungeon perspective allows players to see what is around them rather than in a straight line, and gives the dungeon a lot more detail, and much more . . .

And these are less than half of the discrepancies that were in that article. This is a review? It was my understanding that a review was supposed to point out the good and bad points of a product and leave it up to the consumer to decide if that is what he wants. I resent this reviewer arbitrarily deciding what everyone will like and not like and making a decision for them. As a consumer, I want to hear both sides of the story and this review makes me wonder if many others that I have read are similarly biased. I can't help but wonder if I have stopped from buying a really decent game because some reviewer had an off day.

Al Escudero
Vancouver, B.C.

Ed.: We do recognize that lots of work goes into designing a computer game and it hurts to have a negative review, especially if one feels it is unfair. So, we regularly print responses from designers such as yourself. Just to show that there are others in agreement with Scorpia, however, we thought the following letter might be relevant.

Please encourage Scorpia to continue her run of blunt, matter-of-fact reviews. I'm very pleased to find a reviewer of computer games who isn't afraid to call a spade a spade! I have nothing but disdain for designers who develop generic junk or the software houses who peddle them as the "New wave in game design." **EA**'s *Deathlord* is a prime example.

Bryan A. Walker
Ft. Rucker, AL

Ed.: Uh, Bryan meet Al. Al meet Bryan. You guys might want to meet at a certain tavern and hash this one out. I mean, Fred is back from the grues' convention and I'm sure there'll be a roaring fire when the weather gets cold. Maybe Scorpia can let us know how this one comes out.

Wimpy Letters Column

Oh, boy, my honor has been besmirched! Since I'm the only one, I think, who has ever written in and *complained* about your magazine—or, at least, one of the very few whose complaints have been published—the letters printed in issue 51 seem like direct attacks on my honor! Let me say that I *love CGW*; it's easily my most favorite magazine that I get regularly each month (right up there next to my *Dallas Cowboys Weekly* - real intellectual reading, eh?) . . . hmm, I could've said "right up there next to *Sluts and Slobs*, so give me a break, okay? Anyway, I critique because I want the magazine to get better—like, for instance, the new *CGW Hall of Fame* frame. Still a little busy, but much closer to the theme of the magazine, more original, and even kind of artistic and dainty!

But really, the letters in 51 read almost like the ones comic books used to print—"I really love *Smatterman*; it's the most illuminating and phenomenal literature in the Cosmos" kind of thing.

Enough of the namby-pamby "*CGW*'s so wonderful I wash my body with it" stuff. Let's have some intelligent reactions to your articles (like the letter from Mr. Kenney)! I only read half of it, but, hey, the point is, I appreciated his effort!

I keep hoping we can have a forum for computer gamers in *Computer Gaming World*, a place where we can exchange ideas and suggestions about games, and have fun, to boot.

I have enjoyed Scorpia's reviews (though I'm still curious about what she looks like). I have enjoyed Johnny Wilson's writings and my interactions with him (and, well, now, my second review *for* him).

But, most of all, I have enjoyed the monthly interaction with other computer gamers that CGW gives me. It is sometimes a solitary pursuit, so it"s nice to know you're there.

But be brave! There's no need to hide behind a bunch of readers' gushy phrases! Remember King Lear and which daughter really loved him.

Dennis Owens
Houston, TX

Ed.: Your letter has inspired us and we really want to be as brave as you suggest, but we just haven't quite reached that point. So, here's this month's cheerleaders.

And Now, Something Completely Different

I have been a subscriber since March of 1986 and want to thank you for doing such a fine magazine. It is the best in its field. There would be a great black hole without CGW.

Jonte Regnell
Sweden

I quite enjoy *Computer Gaming World* and know it has saved me literally hundreds of dollars when purchasing game software. There's a lot of great stuff out there, but there's also a whole lot of junk, and you guys seem the most objective so I trust your opinions above all others.

Tomm Munro
Federal Way, WA

Industry News

(Continued from page 10)

a licensing agreement with **New World Computing** to publish a *Tunnels & Trolls* computer version. A verbal agreement has also been reached for the two companies to cooperate on the computer version of *Nukewar*. In addition, the product based on **FASA**'s *Battletech* license is nearing completion at **Infocom**. The company has taken great care to be certain that the fiction involved in the computer products dovetail with the fiction behind the company's own *Battletech* products.

Broderbund Announces CD-ROM Project

One of the most awesome reference works of the 1960s was the popular *Whole Earth Catalog*. Now, Broderbund is combining the use of **HyperCard** on the Apple Macintosh and CD-ROM (Compact Disk - Read Only Memory) in order to publish *The Electronic Whole Earth Catalog*. Perhaps the most awesome concept in indexing ever, the catalog will actually allow researchers to *listen* to excerpts from over 100 recordings rather than simply read about them. The product is expected to be available prior to the end of 1988, 20 years after the print version first appeared (1968).

Mindscape Experiences $281,000 Loss

MINDSCAPE

Although total sales increased by 28.4% to $5.4 million in the quarter ending June, 1988, **Mindscape,** was forced to post a $281,000 loss (compared to a $309,000 profit in the same quarter of the previous year) in its first quarter as a publicly-held corporation. Despite such gloomy figures, President and CEO Roger Buoy was undaunted. The CEO suggested that the poor results reflected the seasonality of the company's sales and suggested that the last half of the year (historically, the company's better quarters) would change the picture for the 130 employee company. **Mindscape** recently offered 1.1 million shares of common stock at $9 per share by going public in June of 1988.

INFOCOM PRESIDENT RESIGNS

Joel Berez, President of **Infocom**, has resigned to assume the helm of family-founded **Action Industries**, a manufacturer and wholesaler of houseware and gift items. Michael Dornbrook, Vice-President of Marketing for the Cambridge, MA based company, and Joe Ybarra, new Vice-President of Product Development (formerly of **Electronic Arts**' Interactive Stories Division), will share leadership responsibilities at **Infocom**.

INFOCOM

Reader Input Device #52

On this page, a number of games and articles are listed for evaluation. Some general interest questions are provided, as well. For each game you have played or article you have read, place a 1 (terrible) through 9 (outstanding) next to the appropriate number on the card provided opposite page 4.

Games

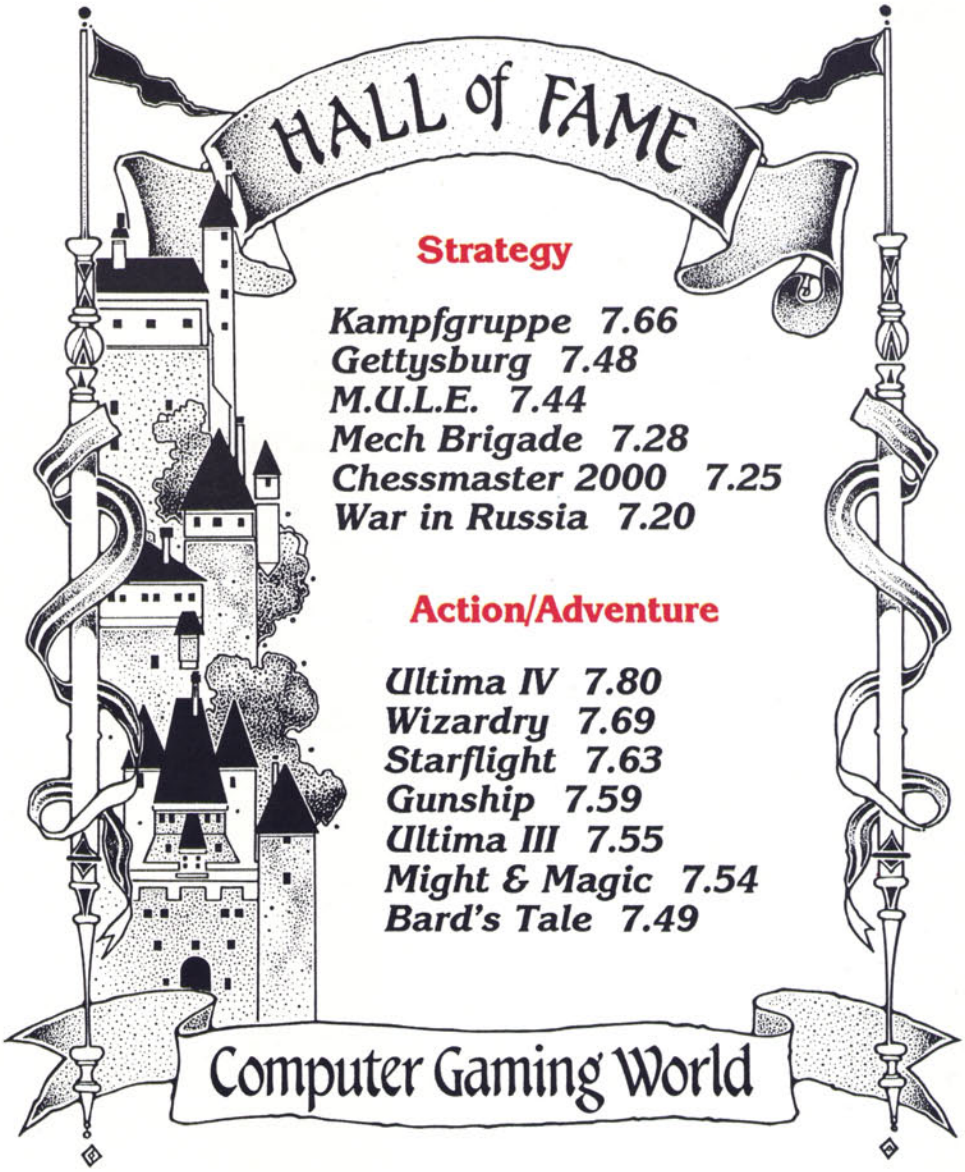
1. Wasteland (EA)
2. Dungeon Master (FTL)
3. Ultima V (Origin)
4. Pirates (Microprose)
5. Bard's Tale III (EA)
6. Falcon (Spectrum Holobyte)
7. Stealth Fighter (Microprose)
8. Faery Tale Adv. (microillusions)
9. Three Stooges (Cinemaware)
10. Shadowgate (Mindscape)
11. Empire (Interstel)
12. Earl Weaver Baseball (EA)
13. Breach (Omnitrend)
14. Rommel: Battles No. Africa (SSG)
15. Under Fire (AH)
16. Silent Service (Microprose)
17. NFL Challenge (XOR)
18. Three-in-One Football (LH)
19. Strike Fleet (EA)
20. Balance of Power (Mindscape)
21. War in So. Pacific (SSI)
22. Panzer Strike (SSI)
23. Carrier Command (Rainbird)
24. Ocean Ranger (Activision)
25. Ferrari Formula I (EA)
26. Fire Brigade (Panther)
27. Nobunaga's Ambition (Koei)
28. Rocket Ranger (Cinemaware)
29. The Colony (Mindscape)
30. Star Trek: First Contact (Simon & Schuster)
31. Dr. Dumont's Wild P.A.R.T.I. (First Row)
32. The Civil War (Avalon Hill)
33. Sargon 4 (Spinnaker)
34. Global Commander (Datasoft)
35. PT-109 (Spectrum Holobyte)
36. Reach for Stars 3rd Edition (SSG)
37. Warship (SSI)
38. Paladin (Omnitrend)
39. Final Assault (Epyx)
40. The Games: Summer Edition (Broderbund)

Articles

41. Letters
42. Star Trek: Rebel Universe Review
43. Rocket Ranger Review
44. Jordan vs. CGW One on One
45. Star Trek: First Contact Review
46. Zak McCracken Review
47. Carrier Command Review
48. Red Storm First Look
49. Fantastic Voyage (Co. Report) Feature
50. Pete Rose Pennant Fever Sneak Preview
51. Pete Rose Interview
52. Inside the Industry
53. Scorpion's Mail

Questions:

54. What percentage of your software purchases do you make by mail order (or phone order)?
a) 0-5%
b) 6-20%
c) 21-40%
d) 41-75%
e) 76-100%



Be it known to all gentle persons that the games inscribed above are honored for their high popularity with the people of our fair land. These august games have been well spoken of by our readers over a goodly period of time and, thereby, have gained the respect and good will of the powers that be at CGW. Be it known to all that read these words that any game found on this list is a game of renown and worthy of play by all.

Game Ratings Chart

Those wild and crazy mutants from "Wasteland" continue to hold the high ground on the Action/Adventure list, while "Dungeon Master" attempts to burrow underneath. "Ultima V"'s strong showing enabled Lord British to escape capture by "Pirates." Mindscape's "Shadowgate" offers a welcome, if somewhat mysterious, new face to the top ten as the "Macaventure" series gains popularity on formats other than the Macintosh.

Attrition continues on the Strategy list. Except for the older titles which have moved up due to the removal of out-of-print and "Hall of Fame" titles, SSG's "Rommel: Battles for North Africa" is the only new face in the top ten. Will this World War II title find a "Breach" in the top three? Tune in next month.

Strategy Top 50

Name	Mfg	Machine	Tms Rtd	Avg Rsp	Rating
Empire	Intstel	Many	8	40	7.79
Earl Weaver Bsball	EA	Am,I	9	44	7.33
Breach	Omtrnd	Many	6	50	7.10
Rommel: Battles	SSG	A,C	1	20	7.07
Crusade in Europe	MicPr	Many	9	60	7.06
Decision in Desert	MicPr	Many	9	36	7.06
Silent Service	MicPr	Many	6	108	7.06
Under Fire	AH	Ap	6	23	7.06
NFL Challenge	XOR	I,M	5	20	7.05
3-in-1 Football	Hafner	Many	2	20	7.05
Strike Fleet	EA	A,C	5	43	7.05
Carrier Force	SSI	C,Ap,At	5	108	7.04
War in So. Pac.	SSI	Ap,C	5	23	7.04
Flight Sim II	SubLg	Many	6	84	7.03
Reach for Stars	SSG	Many	6	47	7.02
Anc Art War Sea	Brdrbd	I	3	26	7.01
Battle of Antietam	SSI	Many	12	41	7.01
Europe Ablaze	SSG	C,Ap	9	32	7.01
Ancient Art of War	Brodr	I,M	10	39	6.99
Russia	SSG	Ap,C	11	32	6.98
Battlegroup	SSI	C,Ap	4	35	6.95
Defender Crown	MstDsg	Many	8	51	6.95
Rebel Charge	SSI	Many	8	28	6.94
Lords of Conquest	EA	Many	3	42	6.93
Star Fleet I	Intstel	Many	6	46	6.93
Field of Fire	SSI	Ap,C,At	5	67	6.92
U.S.A.A.F.	SSI	C,Ap,At	2	26	6.92
Halls Montezuma	SSG	C,Ap	4	26	6.91
Balance of Power	Mndscp	Many	5	37	6.98
Battlefront	SSG	Ap,C	8	34	6.89
Micro Lg Baseball	MicLg	Many	5	72	6.88
Shiloh: Grant's	SSI	Ap,C,I	5	26	6.83
Roadwar 2000	SSI	Many	3	34	6.80
Computer Ambush	SSI	Many	6	49	6.78
Panzer Strike	SSI	Ap,C	4	28	6.78
Computer Baseball	SSI	All	8	37	6.77
Gato	SpHb	Many	3	79	6.77
Gulf Strike	AH	Many	4	33	6.75
Dec. Battles ACW	SSG	A,C	2	20	6.74
Geopolitique 1990	Th.Mt.	Ap,C	3	29	6.73
No. Atlantic '86	SSI	Ap,M	2	72	6.65
Conflict in Viet	MicPr	Many	5	21	6.63
Battlecruiser	SSI	Ap,At,C	3	29	6.61
Knights of Desert	SSI	Many	5	63	6.61
U.M.S.	Rnbrd	ST,I	3	31	6.61
Chickamauga	GDW	At,C	2	26	6.60
Warship	SSI	Many	4	44	6.57
Fifth Eskadra	SimCan	Many	2	20	6.53
Carriers at War	SSG	C,Ap	7	66	6.48
Norway 1985	SSI	Ap,C	4	16	6.48

Adventure/Action Top 50

Name	Mfg	Machine	Tms Rtd	Avg Rsp	Rating
Wasteland	EA	A,C	4	47	7.91
Dungeon Master	FTL	ST	5	42	7.79
Ultima V	Origin	Ap,I	3	48	7.73
Pirates	MicPr	Many	10	51	7.68
Bard's Tale III	EA	A, C	3	45	7.59
Falcon	SpHolo	I,M	5	24	7.45
Stealth Fighter	MicPr	C	8	23	7.40
Faery Tale Adv.	Micrill	Many	6	34	7.32
Three Stooges	Cnmwre	Am,C	3	33	7.29
Shadowgate	Mindsc	Am,I	1	36	7.14
Bard's Tale II	EA	Many	12	55	7.13
Phantasie	SSI	Many	10	68	7.13
Spellbreaker	Infcm	Many	5	24	7.09
Zork Series	Infcm	Many	7	122	7.09
Archon I	EA	Many	12	96	7.08
Legacy of Llygamyn	SirTc	Ap,I	9	52	7.08
Pinball Const. Set	EA	Many	4	47	7.08
Lode Runner	EA	Many	6	60	7.07
Phantasie II	SSI	Many	6	36	7.07
Questron	SSI	C,Ap,At	6	90	7.07
Sorcerer	Infcm	Many	5	58	7.07
Police Quest	Sierra	I,M,IIGS	4	25	7.06
Wizard's Crown	SSI	Many	11	58	7.06
Legacy Ancients	EA	Ap,C	4	46	7.05
Enchanter	Infcm	Many	4	45	7.02
Eternal Dagger	SSI	Ap,At,C	3	28	7.00
One on One	EA	Many	8	75	7.00
Ultima II	Orign	Ap	8	61	7.00
Leather Goddesses	Inf	Many	2	31	6.98
Ultima I	Orign	Ap,C	2	48	6.96
Auto Duel	Orign	Many	2	65	6.95
Airborne Ranger	MicPr	C,I	5	24	6.94
Deadline	Infcm	Ap,At,I	3	44	6.94
King's Quest II	Sierra	Many	3	20	6.88
World Class Ldr Bd	Access	Am,C	4	20	6.88
Return to Atlantis	EA	Am	2	23	6.87
Hitchhiker's Guide	Infcm	Many	4	108	6.86
Planetfall	Infcm	Many	3	51	6.86
Beyond Zork	Infcm	Many	2	30	6.80
Return of Werdna	SirTc	Many	4	21	6.80
Summer Games	Epyx	Many	2	35	6.79
Wishbringer	Infcm	Many	3	36	6.79
Choplifter	Brdrbnd	Ap,C	6	70	6.78
Racing Dest Set	EA	C,At	3	49	6.78
Phantasie III	SSI	Many	2	26	6.76
Demon Stalkers	EA	C	2	20	6.76
Hardball!	Accld	Many	8	43	6.73
C. Yeager's AFT	EA	Many	2	36	6.72
Marble Madness	EA	Many	2	20	6.71
Wings of Fury	Brdbnd	A	1	21	6.71



Magical Mysterious Tour
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SIR GALAND
ZENON III
SWIFTY SARG
SERENA
WIZZ BANE
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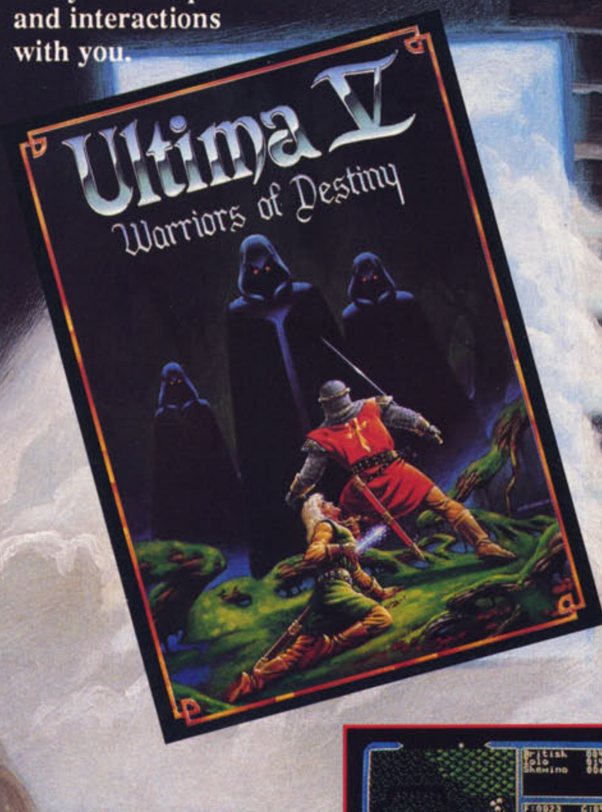
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